

*The King & Card often bought by us not a few  
handed & the report that has very truly  
attended it particular as the same is  
The happy play of *Shakespeare*  
in the year 1719, the  
12th edition printed 1719 & 1720  
49, 1719, 1720  
Lent well it  
690 by 49 at  
Lovers into  
political Justice*

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
KING  
LEAR.

Acted at the  
Queen's Theatre.

Reviv'd with Alterations.

By N. TATE.

L O N D O N.

Printed for R. Bentley, and M. Magnes in  
Russel-street near Covent-Garden, 1689.

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
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As performed at the

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LONDON

Printed for R. Bentley, and M. Mathew in  
Rough Street near Covent Garden



T O  
My Esteemed FRIEND

Tho. Boteler, Esq;

SIR,

**Y**OU have a natural Right to this Piece, since by your Advice I attempted the Revival of it with Alterations. Nothing but the Power of your Persuasion, and my Zeal for all the Remains of Shakespear, cou'd have wrought me to so bold an Undertaking. I found that the New-modelling of this Story, wou'd force me sometimes on the difficult Task of making the chiefest Persons speak something like their Character, on Matter whereof I had no Ground in my Author. Lear's real and Edgar's pretended Madness have so much of extravagant Nature, (I know not how else to express it,) as cou'd never have started but from our Shakespear's Creating Fancy. The Images and Language are so odd and surprizing, and yet so agreeable and proper, that whilst we grant that none but Shakespear cou'd have form'd such Conceptions; yet we are satisfied that they were the only Things in the World that ought to be said on those Occasions. I found the whole to answer your account of it, a Heap of Jewels, unstrung, and unpolisht; yet so dazzling in their Disorder, that I soon perceiv'd I had seiz'd a Treasure. 'Twas my good Fortune to light on one Expedient to rectifie what was wanting in the Regularity and Probability of the Tale, which was to run through the whole, a Love betwixt Edgar and Cordelia; that never chang'd word with each other in the Original. This renders Cordelia's Indifference, and her Father's Passion in the first Scene, probable. It likewise gives Countenance to Edgar's Disguise, making that a generous Design that was before a poor Shift to save his Life. The Distress of the Story is evidently heightened by it; and it particularly gave Occasion of a New Scene or Two, of more Success (perhaps) than Merit. This Method necessarily,

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*sarily threw me on making the Tale conclude in a Success to the innocent distrest Persons: Otherwise I must have incumbred the Stage with dead Bodies, which Conduct makes many Tragedies conclude with unseasonable Fests. Yet was I wrackt with no small Fears for so bold a Change, till I found it well receiv'd by my Audience; and if this will not satisfie the Reader, I can produce an Authority that questionless will. Neither is it of so Trivial an Undertaking to make a Tragedy end happily, for 'tis more difficult to save than 'tis to Kill: The Dagger and Cup of Poison are always in Readiness; but to bring the Action to the last Extremity, and then by probable Means to recover All, will require the Art and Judgment of a Writer, and cost him many a Pang in the Performance.*

Mr. Dryd.  
Pref. to the  
Span. Fryer.

*I have one thing more to apologize for, which is, that I have us'd less Quaintness of Expression even in the newest Parts of this Play. I confess. 'twas Design in me, partly to comply with my Author's Style, to make the Scenes of a Piece, and partly to give it some Resemblance of the Time and Persons here Represented. This, Sir, I submit wholly to you, who are both a Judge and Master of Style. Nature had exempted you before you went Abroad from the Morose Saturnine Humour of our Country, and you brought home the Refinedness of Travel without the Affectation. Many Faults I see in the following Pages, and question not but you will discover more; yet I will presume so far on your Friendship, as to make the whole a Present to you, and Subscribe my self*

Your obliged Friend

and humble Servant,

N. Tate.

PRO-



# PROLOGUE.

**S**ince by Mistakes your best delights are made,  
(For ev'en your Wives can please in Masquerade,) 'Twere worth our while, I have drawn you in this Day,  
By a new Name to our old honest Play;  
But he that did this Evenings Treat prepare  
Bluntly resolv'd before hand to declare  
Your entertainment should be most old Fare.  
Yet hopes, since in rich Shakespear's soil it grew  
'Twill relish yet, with those whose Tasts are true,  
And his Ambition is to please a Few.  
If then this Heap of Flow'rs shall chance to wear  
Fresh beauty in the Order they now bear,  
Ev'en this Shakespear's Praise; each rustick knows  
'Mongst plenteous Flow'rs a Garland to Compose  
Which strung by this Course Hand may fairer show,  
But 'twas a Power Divine first made 'em grow,  
Why shou'd these Scenes lie hid, in which we find  
What may at once divert and teach the Mind;  
Morals were always proper for the Stage,  
But are ev'n necessary in this Age.  
Poets must take the Churches Teaching Trade,  
Since Priests their Province of Intrigue invade;  
But we the worst in this Exchange have got,  
In vain our Poets Preach, whilst Churchmen Plot.

THE

# The Persons.

Mr. Bond	-	King Lear,	-	-	-	Mr. Betterton.
Mr. Cibber	-	Gloster,	-	Harris	-	Mr. Gillo.
	-	Kent,	-	Grooman	-	Mr. Wiltshire.
Mr. Wilks	-	Edgar,	-	to the Gloster	-	Mr. Smith. Verbruggen
Mr. Mills	-	Bastard	-	to the Gloster	-	Mr. Jo Williams.
<del>Mr. Rogers</del>	-	Cornwal,	-	Arnold	-	Mr. Norris.
Mr. Smith	-	Albany,	-	-	-	Mr. Bowman.

Mr. Ponkothian	-	Gentleman.	-	Usher, Bowden.	-	Mr. Fevon.
<del>Mr. Wilks</del>	-	Goneril,	-	See	-	Mrs. Shadwel.
Mr. Wilkins.	-	Regan,	-	See	-	Lady Slingsby.
Mr. Rogers	-	Cordelia,	-	See	-	Mrs. Barry.

Guards, Officers, Messengers, Attendants.

THE



KING LEAR.  
A  
TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

*Enter Bastard solus.*

*Bast.*

**T**

HOU Nature art my Goddess, to thy Law  
My Services are bound; Why am I then  
Depriv'd of a Son's Right, because I came not  
In the dull Road that Custome has prescrib'd?  
Why Bastard, wherefore Base, when I can boast  
A Mind as gen'rous, and a Shape as true  
As honest Madam's Issue? Why are we

Held Base, who in the lusty stealth of Nature  
Take fiercer Qualities than what compound  
The scant'd Births of the stale Marriage-bed?  
Well then, legitimate *Edgar*, to thy Right  
Of Law I will oppose a Bastard's Cunning.  
Our Father's Love is to the Bastard *Edmund*  
As to legitimate *Edgar*: with success  
I've practis'd yet on both their easie Natures:  
Here comes the old Man chapt with th' Information  
Which last I forg'd against my Brother *Edgar*,  
A Tale so plausible, so boldly utter'd,  
And heightned by such lucky Accidents,  
That now the slightest circumstance confirms him,  
And base-born *Edmund* spight of Law inherits.

*Enter Kent and Gloucester.*

*Glouc.* Nay, good my Lord, your Charity  
O'ershoots it self to plead in his behalf;

B

You



You are your self a Father, and may feel  
The sting of disobedience from a Son  
First-born and best belov'd: Oh Villain *Edgar*!

*Kent*. Be not too rash, all may be forgery,  
And time yet clear the Duty of your Son.

*Gloster*. Plead with the Seas, and reason down the Winds,  
Yet shall thou ne'er convince me, I have seen  
His foul Designs through all a Father's fondness:  
But be this Light and Thou my Witnesses,  
That I discard him here from my Possessions,  
Divorce him from my Heart, my Blood, and Name.

*Bast*. It works as I cou'd wish; I'll shew my self.

*Gloster*. Ha *Edmund*! wellcome Boy; O *Kent*! see here  
Inverted Nature, *Gloster's* Shame and Glory,

This By-born, the wild fally of my Youth,  
Pursues me with all filial Offices,  
Whilst *Edgar*, begg'd of Heaven, and born in Honour,  
Draws Plagues on my white Head, that urge me still  
To curse in Age the Pleasure of my Youth.

Nay, weep not, *Edmund*, for thy Brother's crimes;  
O gen'rous Boy! thou shar'st but half his Blood,  
Yet lov'st beyond the kindness of a Brother:  
But I'll reward thy Vertue. Follow me.

My Lord, you wait the King, who comes resolv'd  
To quit the Toils of Empire, and divide  
His Realms amongst his Daughters; Heaven succeed it;  
But much I fear the Change.

*Kent*. I grieve to see him  
With such wild starts of Passion hourly seiz'd,  
As render Majesty beneath it self.

*Gloster*. Alas! 'tis the Infirmary of his Age,  
Yet has his Temper ever been unfixt,  
Choprick and sudden; hark, they approach.

[*Exeunt Gloster and Bast.*]

*Flourish*. Enter *Lear*, *Cornwall*, *Albany*, *Burgundy*, *Edgar*, *Goneril*, *Regan*, *Cordelia*, *Edgar* speaking to *Cordelia* at Entrance.

*Edgar*. *Cordelia*, royal Fair, turn yet once more,  
And e'er successfull *Burgundy* receive  
The treasure of thy Beauties from the King,  
E'er happy *Burgundy* for ever fold Thee,  
Cast back one pitying Look on wretched *Edgar*.

*Cordelia*. Alas! What wou'd the wretched *Edgar* with  
The more unfortunate *Cordelia*;  
Who in obedience to a Father's Will

Flies



# KING LEAR

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Flies from her *Edgar's Arms to Burgundy's?*

*Lear.* Attend my Lords of *Albany*, and *Cornwall*,  
With Princely *Burgundy*.

*Alb.* We do, my Liege.

*Lear.* Give me the Map, — Know, Lords, We have divided  
In Three our Kingdom, having now resolved  
To disengage from Our long Toil of State,  
Conferring All upon your younger years;  
You, *Burgundy*, *Cornwall*, and *Albany*,  
Long in Our Court have made your amorous sojourn,  
And now are to be answer'd. — Tell me, my Daughters,  
Which of you loves Us most, that We may place  
Our largest Bounty with the largest Merit.  
*Gonerill*, Our Eldest-born, speak first.

*Gon.* Sir, I do love You more than words can utter,  
Beyond what can be valu'd, Rich, or Rare;  
Nor Liberty, nor Sight, Health, Fame, or Beauty,  
Are half so dear, my Life for you were vile,  
As much as Child can love the best of Fathers.

*Lear.* Of all these Bounds, ev'n from this Line to this,  
With shady Forests, and wide-skirted Meads,  
We make Thee Lady; to thine and *Albany's* Issue  
Be this perpetual. — What says our Second Daughter?

*Reg.* My Sister, Sir, in part express my Love.  
For such as Hers, is mine, though more extended;  
Sense has no other Joy that I can relish,  
I have my All in my dear Liege's Love.

*Lear.* Therefore to thee and thine Hereditary  
Remain this ample Third of our fair Kingdom.

*Cord.* Now comes my Tryall, how am I distrest, [Aside]  
That must with cold speech tempt the chol'rick King  
Rather to leave me Dowerless, than condemn me  
To loath'd Embraces.

*Lear.* Speak now Our last, not least in Our dear Love,  
So ends my Task of State, — *Cordelia*, speak;  
What canst Thou say to win a richer Third  
Than what thy Sisters gain'd?

*Cord.* Now must my Love in words fall short of theirs  
As much as it exceeds in Truth, — Nothing, my Lord.

*Lear.* Nothing can come of Nothing, speak agen.

*Cord.* Unhappy am I that I can't dissemble,  
Sir, as I ought I love your Majesty,  
No more nor less.

*Lear.* Take heed, *Cordelia*,  
Thy Fortunes are at stake, think better on't,  
And mend thy Speech a little.

B 2

*Cord.*



*Cord.* O my Liege !  
 You gave me Being, bred me, dearly love me,  
 And I return my Duty as I ought,  
 Obey you, love you, and most honour you;  
 Why have my Sisters Husbands, if they love you All?  
 Haply when I shall Wed, the Lord, whose Hand  
 Shall take my Plight, will carry half my Love;  
 For I shall never never marry like my Sisters,  
 To love my Father All.

*Lear.* And goes thy Heart with this?  
 'Tis said that I am Chol'rick; judge me, Gods;  
 Is there not cause? Now, Minion, I perceive  
 The Truth of what has been suggested to Us;  
 Thy Fondness for the Rebel Son of *Gloster*,  
 False to his Father, as Thou art to my Hopes:  
 And, oh! take heed, rash Girl, lest We comply  
 With thy fond Wishes, which thou wilt too late  
 Repent; for know, Our Nature cannot brook  
 A Child so young, and so Ungentle.

*Cord.* So young, my Lord, and True.

*Lear.* Thy Truth then be thy Dow'r;  
 For by the sacred Sun, and solemn Night,  
 I here disclaim all my paternal Care,  
 And from this minute hold thee as a Stranger,  
 Both to my Bloud and Favour.

*Kent.* This is Frenzy.

Consider, good my Liege, —

*Lear.* Peace, *Kent*;  
 Come not between a Dragon and his Rage;  
 I lov'd her most, and in her tender Trust  
 Design'd to have bestow'd my Age at Ease:  
 So be my Grave my Peace, as here I give  
 My Heart from her, and with it all my Wealth:  
 My Lords of *Cornwall*, and of *Albany*,  
 I do invest you jointly with full Right  
 In this fair Third, *Cordelia's* forfeit Dow'r;  
 Mark me, My Lords, observe Our last Resolve,  
 Our Self, attended with an hundred Knights,  
 Will make Abode with you in monthly Course;  
 The Name alone of King remain with me;  
 Yours be the Execution and Revenues;  
 This is our final Will, and, to confirm it,  
 This Coronet part between you.

*Kent.* Royal *Lear*,

Whom I have ever honour'd as my King,  
 Lov'd as my Father, as my Master follow'd

And



# KING LEAR.

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And, as my Patron, thought on in my Pray'rs, —

*Lear.* Away, the Bow is bent, make from the Shaft.

*Kent.* No, let it fall and drench within my Heart,  
Be *Kent* unmannerly when *Lear* is mad:

Thy youngest Daughter —

*Lear.* On thy Life no more.

*Kent.* What wilt thou doe, old Man?

*Lear.* Out of my sight.

*Kent.* See better first.

*Lear.* Now by the gods, —

*Kent.* Now by the gods, rash King, thou swear'st in vain.

*Lear.* Ha, Traitor! —

*Kent.* Doe, kill thy Physician, *Lear*;

Strike through my Throat, yet with my latest Breath.

I'll Thunder in thine Ear my just Complaint,

And tell Thee to thy Face that Thou dost ill.

*Lear.* Hear me, rash Man, on thy Allegiance hear me;

Since thou hast striv'n to make Us break our Vow,

And prest between our Sentence and our Pow'r,

Which nor our Nature nor our Place can bear,

We banish thee for ever from our Sight

And Kingdom; if when Three days are expir'd

Thy hated Trunk be found in our Dominions,

That moment is thy Death; Away.

*Kent.* Why fare thee well, King, since thou art resolv'd,

I take thee at thy word, and will not stay

To see thy Fall: the gods protect the Maid

That truly thinks, and has most justly said.

Thus to new Climates my old Truth I bear,

Friendship lives Hence, and Banishment is here. [Exit.]

*Lear.* Now, *Burgundy*, you see her Price is faln,

Yet if the fondness of your Passion still

Affects her as she stands, Dow'rless, and lost

In our Esteem, she's yours; take her, or leave her.

*Burg.* Pardon me, Royal *Lear*, I but demand

The Dow'r your Self propos'd, and here I take

*Cordelia* by the Hand, Dutcheſs of *Burgundy*.

*Lear.* Then leave her, Sir, for by a Father's rage

I tell you all her Wealth. Away.

*Burg.* Then, Sir, be pleas'd to charge the breach

Of our Alliance on your own Will,

Not my Inconstancy.

[Exeunt: *Manent* Edgar and *Cordelia*.]

*Edg.* Has Heaven then weigh'd the merit of my Love,

Or is't the raving of my sickly Thought?

Could *Burgundy* forgive so rich a Prize,



And leave her to despairing *Edgar's* Arms?  
 Have I thy Hand *Cordelia*, do I clasp it,  
 The Hand that was this minute to have join'd  
 My hated Rival's? Do I kneel before thee,  
 And offer at thy Feet my panting Heart?  
 Smile, Princess, and convince me; for as yet  
 I doubt, and dare not trust the dazling Joy.

*Cord.* Some Comfort yet, that 'twas no vicious Blot  
 That has depriv'd me of a Father's Grace,  
 But meerly want of that that makes me rich  
 In wanting it, a smooth professing Tongue:  
 O Sisters! I am loth to call your fault  
 As it deserves; but use our Father well,  
 And wrong'd *Cordelia* never shall repine.

*Edg.* O heav'nly Maid! that art thy self thy Dow'r,  
 Richer in Vertue than the Stars in Light,  
 If *Edgar's* humble Fortunes may be grac't  
 With thy Acceptance, at thy Feet he lays 'em.  
 Ha, my *Cordelia*! dost thou turn away?  
 What have I done t'offend Thee?

*Cord.* Talk't of Love.

*Edg.* Then I've offended oft, *Cordelia* too  
 Has oft permitted me so to offend.

*Cord.* When, *Edgar*, I permitted your Addresses,  
 I was the darling Daughter of a King,  
 Nor can I now forget my royal Birth,  
 And live dependent on my Lover's Fortune;  
 I cannot to so low a Fate submit;  
 And therefore study to forget your Passion,  
 And trouble me upon this Theme no more.

*Edg.* Thus Majesty takes most State in Distress!  
 How are we tost on Fortune's fickle floud!  
 The Wave that with surprising Kindness brought  
 The dear Wreck to my Arms, has snatcht it back,  
 And left me mourning on the barren Shoar.

*Cord.* This Baseness of th' ignoble *Burgundy*  
 Draws just suspicion on the Race of Men,  
 His Love was Int'rest, so may *Edgar's* be,  
 And He, but with more Complement, dissemble;  
 If so, I shall oblige him by denying:  
 But if his Love be fixt, such constant Flame  
 As warms our Breasts, if such I find his Passion,  
 My Heart as gratefull to his Truth shall be,  
 And Cold *Cordelia* prove as Kind as He.

[*Aside*]

[*Exit*]

*Enter Bastard hastily.*

*Bast.* Brother, I've found you in a lucky minute,

Flie



# KING LEAR.

7

Flie and be safe, some Villain has incens'd  
Our Father against your Life.

*Edg.* Distrest *Cordelia* ! but, oh ! more Cruel.

*Bast.* Hear me, Sir, your Life, your Life's in Danger.

*Edg.* A Resolve so sudden  
And of such black Importance !

*Bast.* 'Twas not sudden,  
Some Villain has of long time laid the Train.

*Edg.* And yet perhaps 'twas but pretended Coldness,  
To try how far my Passion would pursue.

*Bast.* He hears me not ; wake, wake, Sir.

*Edg.* Say ye, Brother ?——

No Tears, good *Edmund*, if thou bringest me tidings  
To strike me dead, for Charity delay not,  
That Present will besit so kind a Hand.

*Bast.* Your danger, Sir, comes on so fast,  
That I want time t'inform you ; but retire  
Whilst I take care to turn the pressing Stream.  
O gods ! for Heav'n's sake, Sir.

*Edg.* Pardon me, Sir, a serious Thought  
Had seiz'd me, but I think you talkt of danger,  
And wisht me to retire ; Must all our Vows  
End thus ?—— Friend, I obey you.—— O *Cordelia* ! [Exit

*Bast.* Ha ! ha ! fond Man, such credulous Honesty  
Lessens the Glory of my Artifice ;  
His Nature is so far from doing wrongs,  
That he suspects none : if this Letter speed  
And pass for *Edgar*'s, as himself wou'd own  
The Counterfeit, but for the foul Contents,  
Then my designs are perfect.—— Here comes *Gloster*.

Enter *Gloster*.

*Gloft.* Stay, *Edmund*, turn ; What paper were you reading ?

*Bast.* A Trifle, Sir.

*Gloft.* What needed then that terrible dispatch of it  
Into your Pocket ? Come, produce it, Sir.

*Bast.* A Letter from my Brother, Sir, I had  
Just broke the Seal, but knew not the Contents ;  
Yet, fearing they might prove too blame,  
Endeavour'd to conceal it from your sight.

*Gloft.* 'Tis *Edgar*'s Character.

[Reads.

*This Policy of Fathers is intolerable, that keeps our Fortunes  
from us till Age will not suffer us to enjoy 'em ; I am weary  
of the Tyranny : Come to me, that of this I may speak more :  
if our Father would sleep till I wak'd him, you shou'd enjoy  
half his Possessions, and live beloved of your Brother*

*Edgar.*

Slept



Slept till I wak'd him, you shou'd enjoy  
Half his Possessions. — *Edgar* to write this  
'Gainst his indulgent Father! Death and Hell!  
Flie, *Edmund*, seek him out, wind me into him,  
That I may bite the Traytor's Heart, and fold  
His bleeding Entrails on my vengefull Arm.

*Bast.* Perhaps 'twas writ, my Lord, to prove my Vertue.

*Gloft.* These late Eclipses of the Sun and Moon  
Can bode no less; Love cools, and Friendship fails,  
In Cities Mutiny, in Countries Discord,  
The bond of Nature crack't 'twixt Son and Father:  
Find out the Villain, doe it carefully,  
And it shall lose thee nothing. [Exit.

*Bast.* So, now my project's firm; but to make sure  
I'll throw in one proof more, and that a bold one;  
I'll place old *Gloster* where he shall o'er-hear us  
Confer of this design, whilst, to his thinking,  
Deluded *Edgar* shall accuse himself.  
Be Honesty my Int'rest, and I can  
Be honest too: And what Saint so Divine,  
That will successfull Villany decline? [Exit.

*Enter Kent disguis'd.*

*Kent.* Now, banisht *Kent*, if thou canst pay thy duty  
In this disguise where thou dost stand condemn'd,  
Thy Master *Lear* shall find thee full of Labours.

*Enter Lear attended.*

*Lear.* In there, and tell our Daughter we are here.  
Now, What art Thou?

*Kent.* A Man, Sir.

*Lear.* What dost thou profess, or wou'dst with us?

*Kent.* I do profess to be no less than I seem, to serve him tru-  
ly that puts me in Trust, to love him that's honest, to converse  
with him that's wise and speaks little, to fight when I can't chuse,  
and to eat no Fish.

*Lear.* I say, what art Thou?

*Kent.* A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the King.

*Lear.* Then art thou poor indeed. — What canst thou doe?

*Kent.* I can keep honest Counsel, marr a curious Tale in the  
telling, deliver a plain Message bluntly, that which ordinary  
Men are fit for I am qualifi'd in, and the best of me is Dili-  
gence.

*Lear.* Follow me; thou shalt serve me.

*Enter*



# KING LEAR

*Enter one of Gonerill's Gentlemen.*

Now Sir?

*Gent.* Sir ————— [*Exit; Kent runs after him.*]

*Lear.* What says the fellow? Call the Clatpole back.

*Att.* My Lord, I know not; but methinks your Highness is entertained with slender Ceremony.

*Servant.* He says, my Lord, your Daughter is not well.

*Lear.* Why came not the Slave back when I call'd him?

*Serv.* My Lord, he answered me i' th' furliest manner, That he wou'd not.

*Re-enter Gentlemen brought in by Kent.*

*Lear.* I hope our Daughter did not so instruct him:  
Now, who am I, Sir?

*Gent.* My Ladies Father.

*Lear.* My Lord's Knave ————— [*Strikes him.*]

[*Goneril at the Entrance.*]

*Gen.* I'll not be struck my Lord.

*Kent.* Nor tript neither, thou vile Civet-box.

[*Strikes up his heels*]

*Gon.* By Day and Night, this is insufferable,  
I will not bear it.

*Lear.* Now, Daughter, why that frontlet on?  
Speak, do's that Frown become our Presence?

*Gon.* Sir, this licentious Insolence of your Servants  
Is most unseemly, hourly they break out  
In quarrels bred by their unbounded Riots;  
I had fair hope by making this known to you  
T'have had a quick Redress, but find too late  
That you protect and countenance their out-rage;  
And therefore, Sir, I take this freedom, which  
Necessity makes Discreet.

*Lear.* Are you our Daughter?

*Gon.* Come, Sir, let me entreat you to make use  
Of your discretion, and put off betimes  
This Disposition that of late transforms you  
From what you rightly are.

*Lear.* Do's any here know me? why, this is not *Lear*;  
Do's *Lear* walk thus? speak thus? where are his Eyes?  
Who is it that can tell me who I am?

*Gon.* Come, Sir, this Admiration's much o'th' favour  
Of other your new humours, I beseech you  
To understand my purposes aright;  
As you are old, you shou'd be staid and wise,

C

Here

Here do you keep an hundred Knights and Squires,  
Men so debauch't and bold that this our Palace  
Shews like a riotous Inn, a Tavern, Brothel;  
Be then advised by her that else will take  
That which she begs, to lessen your Attendance,  
Take half away, and see that the remainder  
Be such as may besit your Age, and know  
Themselves and you.

*Lear.* Darkness and Devils!  
Saddle my Horses, call my Train together,  
Degenerate Viper, I'll not stay with Thee;  
I yet have left a Daughter.—Serpent, Monster,  
Lessen my Train, and call 'em riotous?  
All men approv'd of choice and rarest Parts,  
That each particular of duty know.—  
How small, *Cordelia*, was thy Fault? O *Lear*,  
Beat at this Gate that let thy Folly in,  
And thy dear Judgment out; Go, go, my People.

*[Going off meets Albany entering.]*

Ingratefull Duke, was this your will?

*Alb.* What, Sir?

*Lear.* Death! fifty of my Followers at a Clap!

*Alb.* The matter, Madam?

*Gon.* Never afflict your self to know the Cause,  
But give his Dotage way.

*Lear.* Blasts upon thee,  
Th' untented woundings of a Father's Curse  
Pierce ev'ry Sense about Thee; old fond Eyes,  
Lament this Cause again, I'll pluck ye out,  
And cast ye with the Waters that ye loose  
To temper Clay.—No, *Gorgon*, thou shalt find  
That I'll resume the Shape which thou dost think  
I have cast off for ever.

*Gon.* Mark ye that.

*Lear.* Hear Nature!

Dear Goddesses hear; and if thou dost intend  
To make that Creature fruitfull, change thy purpose;  
Pronounce upon her Womb the barren Curse,  
That from her blasted Body never spring  
A Babe to honour her;—but if she must bring forth,  
Defeat her Joy with some distorted Birth,  
Or Monstrous Form, the Prodigy o' th' Time,  
And so perverse of Spirit, that it may live  
Her torment as 'twas Born, to fret her Cheeks  
With constant Tears, and wrinkle her young Brow.  
Turn all her Mother's Pains to Shame and Scorn,

That



# KING LEAR

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That she may curse her Crime too late, and feel  
How sharper than a Serpent's Tooth it is  
To have a Thankless Child; away, away. *[Exit cum suis.]*

*Gon.* Presuming thus upon his numerous Train  
He thinks to play the Tyrant here, and hold,  
Our Lives at will.

*Alb.* Well, you may bear too far. *[Ex.]*

*End of the First Act.*

## ACT II.

### SCENE, Gloster's House.

*Enter Bastard.*

*Bast.* **T**HE Duke comes here to night, I'll take advantage  
Of his Arrival to complete my project.  
Brother, a Word, come forth; 'tis I your Friend, *[Enter Edgar.]*  
My Father watches for you, fly this place,  
Intelligence is giv'n where you are hid;  
Take the advantage of the Night; bethink ye  
Have not spoke against the Duke of Cornwall  
Something might shew you a favourer of  
Duke Albany's Party?

*Edg.* Nothing; why ask you?

*Bast.* Because he's coming here to Night in haste.  
And Regan with him; — hark! the Guards; away.

*Ed.* Let 'em come on, I'll stay and clear my self.

*Bast.* Your Innocence at leisure may be heard,  
But Gloster's storming Rage as yet is deaf,  
And you may perish e'er allow'd the hearing. *[Ex. Edgar.]*

*Gloster comes yonder: now to my feign'd scuffle —*  
Yield, come before my Father! Lights here, Lights!  
Some Bloud drawn on me wou'd beget opinion *[Stabs his Arm.]*  
Of our more fierce Encounter, — I have seen  
Drunkards doe more than this in sport. *[Enter Gloster.]*

*Gloster.* Now, Edmund, where's the Traytour? *[and Servants.]*

*Bast.* That Name, Sir,  
Strikes Horrour through me, but my Brother, Sir,  
Stood here i' th' Dark.

*Gloster.* Thou bleed'st, pursue the Villain.  
And bring him peace-meal to me.

*Bast.* Sir, he's fled. *[Gloster.]*

*Gloster.* Let him fly far, this Kingdom shall not hide him:  
The noble Duke, my Patron, comes to Night;  
By his Authority I will proclaim  
Rewards for him that brings him to the Stake,  
And Death for the Concealer.  
Then of my Lands, loyal and natural Boy,  
I'll work the means to make thee capable. *[Exeunt.]*

*Enter Kent (disguis'd still) and Goneril's Gentleman, severally.*

*Gent.* Good morrow Friend, belong'st thou to this House?

*Kent.* Ask them will answer thee.

*Gent.* Where may we set our Horses?

*Kent.* I'th' Mine.

*Gent.* I am in haste, prithee an' thou lov'st me, tell me.

*Kent.* I love thee not.

*Gent.* Why then I care not for Thee.

*Kent.* An' I had thee in *Lipsbury* Pinfold, I'd make thee care for me.

*Gent.* What dost thou mean? I know thee not.

*Kent.* But, Minion, I know Thee.

*Gent.* What dost thou know me for?

*Kent.* For a base, proud, beggarly, white-liver'd, Glas-gazing, superserviceable finical Rogue; one that wou'd be a Pimp in way of good Service, and art nothing but a composition of Knave, Beggar, Coward, Pandar.—

*Gent.* What a monstrous Fellow art thou to rail at one that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee?

*Kent.* Impudent Slave, not know me, who but two days since tript up thy heels before the King: Draw, Miscreant, or I'll make the Moon shine through thee.

*Gent.* What means the Fellow?—Why prethee, prethee, I tell thee I have nothing to doe with thee.

*Kent.* I know your Rogueries Office, you come with Letters against the King, taking my young Lady *Vaniry's* part against her Royal Father; draw Rascals.

*Gent.* Murther, murther, help Ho!

*Kent.* Dost thou feream, Peacock, strike Puppet, stand dapper Slave.

*Gent.* Help Hea! Murther, help. *[Exit Kent after him.]*

*Flourish.* Enter Duke of Cornwall, Regan, attended, Gloster, Bastard.

*Gloster.* All Wellcome to your Graces, you doe me honour.

*Duke.* Gloster w've heard with sorrow that your Life

Has



Has been attempted by your Impious Son;  
But *Edmund* here has paid you Strictest Duty.

*Gloster.* He did betray his Practice, and receiv'd  
The Hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

*Duke.* Is he pursu'd?

*Gloster.* He is, my Lord.

*Reg.* Use our Authority to apprehend  
The Traytour and do Justice on his Head;

For you, *Edmund*, that have so signaliz'd

Your Vertue, you from henceforth shall be ours;

Natures of such firm Trust we much shall need,

A Charming Youth, and worth my farther Thought. *[Aside.]*

*Duke.* Lay comforts, noble *Gloster*, to your Breast,

As we to ours, This Night be spent in Revels,

We chuse you, *Gloster*, for our Host to Night,

A troublesome expression of our Love.

On, to the Sports before us.—Who are These?

*Enter the Gentleman pursu'd by Kent.*

*Gloster.* Now, what's the matter?

*Duke.* Keep peace upon your Lives, he dies that strikes.  
Whence, and what are ye?

*Att.* Sir, they are Messengers, the one from your Sister,  
The other from the King.

*Duke.* Your difference? Speak.

*Gent.* I'm scarce in breath, my Lord.

*Kent.* No marvel, you have so bestirr'd your Valour;  
Nature disclaims the Dastard; a Taylor made him.

*Duke.* Speak yet, how grew your Quarrel?

*Gent.* Sir, this old Ruffian here, whose Life I spard  
In pity to his Beard—

*Kent.* Thou Essence Bottle!

In pity to my Beard? — Your leave, my Lord,  
And I will tread the Muff-cat into Mortar,

*Duke.* Know'st thou our Presence?

*Kent.* Yes, Sir, but Anger has a Privilege,

*Duke.* Why art thou angry?

*Kent.* That such a Slave as this shou'd wear a Sword  
And have no Courage; Office, and no Honesty;

Not Frost and Fire hold more Antipathy  
Than I and such a Knave.

*Gloster.* Why dost thou call him Knave?

*Kent.* His Countenance likes me not.

*Duke.* No more perhaps does Mine, nor His, or Hers.

*Kent.* Plain-dealing is my Trade, and to be plain, Sir.



I have seen better Faces in my time,  
Than stands on any Shoulders now before me.

*Reg.* This is some Fellow that having once been prais'd  
For Bluntness, since affects a sawcy Rudeness;  
But I have known one of these surly Knaves,  
That in his Plainness harbour'd more Design  
Than twenty cringing complementing Minions.

*Duke.* What's the Offence you gave him?

*Gent.* Never any, Sir,

It pleas'd the King his Master lately  
To strike me on a slender misconstruction,  
Whilst watching his advantage this old Lurcher,  
Tript me behind, for which the King extoll'd him;  
And, flusht with the honour of this bold exploit,  
Drew on me here agen.

*Duke.* Bring forth the Stocks, we'll teach you.

*Kent.* Sir, I'm too old to learn;  
Call not the Stocks for me, I serve the King,  
On whose Employment I was sent to you,  
You'll shew too small Respect, and too bold Malice  
Against the Person of my Royal Master,  
Stocking his Messenger.

*Duke.* Bring forth the Stocks, as I have Life and Honour,  
There shall he sit till Noon.

*Reg.* Till Noon, my Lord? till Night, and all Night too.

*Kent.* Why Madam, if I were your Father's Dog  
You would not use me so.

*Reg.* Sir, being his Knave I will.

*Gloſt.* Let me beseech your Graces to forbear him,  
His fault is much, and the good King his Master  
Will check him for't, but needs must take it ill  
To be thus slighted in his Messenger.

*Duke.* We'll answer that;

Our Sister may receive it worse to have  
Her Gentleman assaulted, to our business lead. *[Exit.]*

*Gloſt.* I am sorry for thee, Friend, 'tis the Duke's pleasure,  
Whose Disposition will not be controll'd,  
But I'll entreat for thee.

*Kent.* Pray do not, Sir, —  
I have watcht and travell'd hard,  
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle;  
Farewell t'ye, Sir. *[Ex. Gloſt.]*

All weary and o'er-watcht,  
I feel the drowzy Guest steal on me; take  
Advantage heavy Eyes of this kind Slumber,  
Not to behold this vile and shamefull Lodging. *[Sleeps.]*  
*Enter*



*Enter Edgar* My Lord, when at their Home  
I did command your Highness to attend them,  
But I was not arriv'd another Post.

*Edg.* I heard my self proclaim'd,  
And by the friendly Hollow of a Tree,  
Escape the Hunt, no Port is free, no Place  
Where Guards and most unusual Vigilance  
Do not attend to take me; *How else now?*  
'Twere to defeat the malice of my Traile,  
And leave my Grievs on my Sword's reeking point;  
But Love detains me from Death's peacefull Cell,  
Still whispering me, *Cordelia's in distress*  
Unkind as she is, I cannot see her wretched;  
But must be near to wait upon her Fortune.  
Who knows but the white Minute yet may come,  
When *Edgar* may do service to *Cordelia*,  
That charming hope still ties me to the Oar  
Of painfull Life, and makes me to submit —  
To th' humblest shifts to keep that Life a Foot;  
My face I will besmear, and knit my Locks,  
The Country gives me proof and president  
Of *Bedlam* Beggars, who, with roaring Voices,  
Strike in their numm'd and mortify'd bare Arms  
Pins, Iron-spikes, Thorns, Sprigs of *Rosemary*;  
And thus from *Sheeps-coats*, Villages, and Mills,  
Sometimes with Prayers, sometimes with *Lunatick* Banns,  
Enforce their Charity, poor *Tyrlogod*, poor *Tam*,  
That's something yet, *Edgar* I am no more. *[Exit.]*

*Kent in the Stocks still; Enter Lear attended.*

*Lear.* 'Tis strange that they shou'd so depart from home,  
And not send back our Messenger.

*Kent.* Hail, noble Master.

*Lear.* How! Mak'st thou this Shame thy Pastime?  
What's he that has so much mistook thy Place,  
To set thee here?

*Kent.* It is both He and She, Sir, your Son and Daughter.

*Lear.* No. *Kent.* Yes. *Lear.* No, I say. *Kent.* I say yea.

*Lear.* By *Jupiter* I swear no.

*Kent.* By *Juno* I swear, I swear Ay.

*Lear.* They durst not do't;  
They cou'd not, wou'd nor do't; this worse than *Murther*,  
To doe upon Respect such violent outrage;  
Resolve me with all modest haste, which way  
Thou mayst deserve, or they impose this usage?

*Kent.*



*Kent.* My Lord, when at their Home  
I did commend your Highness Letters to them,  
E'er I was ris'n, arriv'd another Post,  
Steer'd in his haste, breathless and panting forth  
From *Goneril*, his Mistress, Salutations,  
Whose Message being deliver'd, they took Horse,  
Commanding me to follow, and attend  
The leisure of their Answer; which I did;  
But meeting that other Messenger,  
Whose welcome I perceiv'd had poison'd mine,  
Being the very Fellow that of late  
Had shewn such rudeness to your Highness, I  
Having more Man than Wit about me, Drew,  
On which he rais'd the House with Coward cries:  
This was the Trespass which your Son and Daughter  
Thought worth the shame you see it suffer here.

*Lear.* Oh! how this Spleen swells upward to my Heart,  
And heaves for passage. — Down, thou climbing Rage;  
Thy Element's below; where is this Daughter?

*Kent.* Within, Sir, at a Masque.

*Enter Gloster.*

*Lear.* Now *Gloster*? — ha?  
Deny to speak with me? th'are sick, th'are weary,  
They have travell'd hard to Night; — mere fetches;  
Bring me a better Answer.

*Gloster.* My dear Lord.  
You know the fiery quality of the Duke. —

*Lear.* Vengeance, Death, Plague, Confusion;  
Fiery! what Quality. — Why *Gloster*, *Gloster*,  
I'd speak with the Duke of *Cornwal*, and his Wife.

*Gloster.* I have inform'd 'em so.

*Lear.* Inform'd 'em! dost thou understand me, Man,  
I tell thee, *Gloster*, —

*Gloster.* Ay, my good Lord.

*Lear.* The King wou'd speak with *Cornwal*, the dear Father  
Wou'd with his Daughter speak, commands her Service.  
Are they inform'd of this? my Breath and Bloud!  
Fiery! the fiery Duke! tell the hot Duke —  
No, but not yet, may be he is not well;  
Infirmity do's still neglect all Office;  
I beg his Pardon, and I'll chide my Rashness  
That took the indispos'd and sickly Fit  
For the sound Man: — But wherefore sits he there?  
Death on my State, this Act convinces me

That



That this Retiredness of the Duke and her,  
Is plain Contempt; give me my Servant forth;  
Go tell the Duke and his Wife I'd speak with 'em;  
Now, instantly, bid 'em come forth and hear me;  
Or at their Chamber door I'll beat the Drum;  
Till it cry sleep to Death.

Enter Cornwall and Regan

Oh! Are ye come?

Duke. Health to the King.

Reg. I am glad to see your Highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are, I know what cause

I have to think so; should'st thou not be glad

I wou'd divorce me from thy Mother's Tomb?

Beloved Regan, thou wilt shake to hear

What I shall utter: Thou could'st ne'r ha' thought it,

Thy Sisters naught, O Regan, she has y'd

Ingratitude like a keen Vulture here,

I scarce can speak to thee.

Reg. I pray you, Sir, take patience; I have hope

That you know less to value her Desert,

Than she to slack her Duty.

Lear. Ha! How's that?

Reg. I cannot think my Sister in the least

Would fail in her respects; but if perchance

She has restrain'd the Riots of your Followers,

'Tis on such Grounds, and to such wholesome Ends,

As clears her from all Blame.

Lear. My Curses on her.

Reg. O Sir, you are old,

And shou'd content you to be rul'd and led,

By some discretion that discerns your State

Better than your self; therefore, Sir,

Return to our Sister, and say you have wrong'd her.

Lear. Ha! Ask her Forgiveness?

No, no; 'twas my mistake, thou didst not mean so;

Dear Daughter, I confess that I am old;

Age is unnecessary, but thou art good,

And wilt dispense with my infirmity.

Reg. Good Sir, no more of these unsightly passions;

Return back to our Sister.

Lear. Never, Regan,

She has abated me of half of my Train,

Lookt black upon me, stabb'd me with her Tongue;

All the stor'd Vengeances of Heav'n fall



On her Ingratefull Head ; strike her young Bones  
Ye taking Airs with Lameness.

*Reg.* O the blest Gods ! Thus will you wish on me,  
When the rash mood—

*Lear.* No, *Regan*, Thou shalt never have my Curse,  
Thy tender Nature cannot give thee o'er  
To such Impiety ; Thou better know'st  
The Offices of Nature, Bond of Child-hood,  
And Dues of Gratitude ; Thou bear'st in mind  
The half o'th' Kingdom, which our love conferr'd  
On thee and thine.

*Reg.* Good Sir, to th' purpose.

*Lear.* Who put my Man i'th' Stocks ?

*Duke.* What Trumpet's that ?

*Reg.* I know't, my Sisters, this confirms her Letters.  
Sir, is your Lady come ?

*Enter Goneril's Gentleman.*

*Lear.* More Torture still ?

This is a Slave, whose easie borrow'd pride  
Dwells in the fickle Grace of her he follows ;  
A Fashion-fop, that spends the day in Dressing,  
And all to bear his Lady's flatt'ring Message,  
That can deliver with a Grace her Lye,  
And with as bold a face bring back a greater  
Out, Varlet, from my sight.

*Duke.* What means your Grace ?

*Lear.* Who stockt my Servant ? *Regan*, I have hope  
Thou didst not know it.

*Enter Goneril.*

Who comes here ? Oh Heavens !  
If you do love old Men ; if your sweet sway  
Allow Obedience ; if your selves are Old,  
Make it your Cause, send down and take my part ;  
Why, *Gorgon*, dost thou come to haunt me here ?  
Art not asham'd to look upon this Beard ?  
Darkness upon my Eyes, they play me false,  
O *Regan*, Wilt thou take her by the Hand ?

*Gon.* Why not by th' Hand, Sir ? How have I offended ?  
All's not Offence that Indiscretion finds,  
And Dotage terms so.

*Lear.* Heart, thou art too tough.

*Reg.* I pray you, Sir, being old, confess you are so,

If



If till the expiration of your Month,  
You will return and sojourn with your Sister,  
Dismissing half your Train, come then to me;  
I am now from Home, and out of that Provision  
That shall be needfull for your entertainment.

*Lear.* Return with her, and fifty Knights dismiss?  
No, rather I'll forswear all Roofs, and chuse  
To be Companion to the Midnight Wolf,  
My naked Head expos'd to th' merc'less Air,  
Than have my smallest wants suppli'd by her.

*Gon.* At your choice, Sir.

*Lear.* Now I prithée Daughter do not make me mad;  
I will not trouble thee, my Child, farewell.  
We'll meet no more, no more see one another;  
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it,  
I do not bid the Thunder-bearer strike,  
Nor tell tales of thee to avenging Heav'n;  
Mend when thou canst, be better at thy leisure,  
I can be patient, I can stay with Regan,  
I, and my hundred Knights.

*Reg.* Your Pardon, Sir.

I lookt not for you yet, nor am provided  
For your fit wellcome.

*Lear.* Is this well spoken now?

*Reg.* My Sister treats you fair; what! fifty followers;  
Is it not well? What shou'd you need of more?

*Gon.* Why might not you, my Lord, receive Attendance  
From those whom she calls Servants, or from mine?

*Reg.* Why not, my Lord? if then they chance to slack you,  
We cou'd controll 'em. — If you come to me,  
For now I see the Danger, I entreat you  
To bring but Five and Twenty; to no more  
Will I give place.

*Lear.* Hold now, my Temper, stand this bolt unmov'd,  
And I am Thunder proof;  
The wicked, when compar'd with the more wicked,  
Seem beautifull, and not to be the worst,  
Stands in some rank of Praise; now, *Goneril*,  
Thou art innocent agen, I'll go with thee;  
Thy Fifty yet, do's double Five and Twenty,  
And thou art twice her Love.

*Gon.* Hear me, my Lord.  
What need you Five and Twenty, Ten, or Five,  
To follow in a House, where twice so many  
Have a command t'attend you?

*Reg.* What need one?



*Lear.* Bloud ! Fire ! here — Leprosies and bluest plagues,  
Room, room for Hell to belch her Horrors up  
And drench the *Circes* in a stream of Fire,  
Heark how th' Infernals eccho to my rage  
Their Whips and Snakes. —

*Reg.* How lewd a thing is Passion !

*Gon.* So old and stomachfull, *[Lightning and Thunder.]*

*Lear.* Heav'ns drop your Patience down;  
You see me here, ye Gods, a poor old Man,  
As full of Griefs as Age, wretched in both. —  
I'll bear no more : No, you unnatural Hagg,  
I will have such Revenges on you both,  
That all the world shall — I will doe such things,  
What they are yet I know not, but they shall be  
The Terrors of the Earth ; you think I'll weep, *[Thunder again.]*  
This Heart shall break into a thousand pieces  
Before I'll weep. — O Gods ! I shall go mad. *[Exit.]*

*Duke.* 'Tis a wild Night, come out o'th' Storm. *[Exit.]*

*End of the Second Act.*

## ACT III.

### SCENE, A Desert Heath.

*Enter Lear and Kent in the Storm.*

*Lear.* **B**LOW Winds, and burst your Cheecks, rage louder yet,  
Fantastick Lightning singe, singe my white Head,  
Spout Cataracts, and Hurricanoes fall,  
Till you have drown'd the Towns and Palaces  
Of proud ingratefull Man.

*Kent.* Not all my best Entreaties can persuade him  
Into some needfull shelter, or to bide  
This poor slight Cov'ring on his aged Head  
Expos'd to this wild War of Earth and Heav'n.

*Lear.* Rumble thy fill, light Whirlwind, Rain, and Fire  
Not Fire, Wind, Rain or Thunder are my Daughters  
I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness  
I never gave you Kingdoms, call'd you Children  
You owe me no Obedience, then let fall  
Your horrible pleasure, here I stand your Slave,  
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man ;

*Yet.*



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Yet will I call you servile Ministers,  
That have with two pernicious Daughters join'd  
Their high engendred Battel against a Head  
So Old and White as mine, Oh! oh! 'tis Foul.

*Kent.* Hard by, Sir, is a Hovel, that will lend  
Some Shelter from this Tempest.

*Lear.* I will forget my Nature, what! so kind a Father;  
Ay, there's the Point.

*Kent.* Consider, good my Liege, Things that love Night  
Love not such Nights as this; these wrathfull Skies  
Frighten the very wanderers o'th' Dark,  
And make 'em keep their Caves; such drenching Rain,  
Such Sheets of Fire, such Claps of horrid Thunder,  
Such Groans of roaring Winds have ne'er been known.

*Lear.* Let the Great Gods,  
That keep this dreadfull pudder o'er our Heads,  
Find out their Enemies now. Tremble, thou Wretch,  
That haste within thee undiscover'd Crimes;  
Hide, thou Bloudy hand, —  
Thou perjur'd Villain, holy Hyppocrite,  
That drinkst the Widows Tears, sigh now, and cry  
These dreadfull Summoners Grace, I am a Man  
More sinn'd against than sinning.

*Kent.* Good Sir, to th' Hovel.

*Lear.* My Wit begins to burn,  
Come on my Boy, how dost my Boy? art Cold?  
I'm cold my Self; shew me this Straw, my fellow,  
The Art of our Necessity is strange,  
And can make vile things precious; my poor Knave,  
Cold as I am at Heart, I've one place There  
That's sorry yet for Thee.

[Loud Storm.]

[Exit.]

*Gloster's Palace. Enter Bastard.*

*Bast.* The Storm is in our louder Rev'lings drown'd.  
Thus wou'd I Reign, cou'd I but mount a Throne.  
The Riots of these proud imperial Sisters  
Already have impos'd the galling Yoke  
Of Taxes, and hard Impositions on  
The drudging Pefants Neck, who bellow out  
Their loud complaints in vain. — Triumphant Queens!  
With what Assurance do they treat the Crowd.  
O for a Taste of such Majestick Beauty,  
Which none but my hot Veins are fit t'engage;  
Nor are my Wishes desperate, for ev'n now,  
During this Banquet, I observ'd their Glances.

Shot.



Shot thick at me, and as they left the Room  
Each cast by stealth a kind inviting Smile,  
The happy Earnest — ha !

*Two Servants from several Entrances deliver him each a Letter, and Ex.*

Where merit is so Transparent, not to behold it [Reads.  
Were Blindness, and not to reward it Ingratitude.

Goneril.

Enough ! Blind, and Ingratefull should I be  
Not to Obey the Summons of this Oracle.  
Now for a Second Letter.

[Opens the other.

If Modesty be not your Enemy, doubt not to  
Find me your Friend.

[Reads.

Regan.

Excellent Sybill ! O my glowing Bloud !  
I am already sick of expectation,  
And pant for the Possession. — Here *Gloster* comes  
With bus'ness on his Brow ; be husht, my Joys.

*Gloft.* I come to seek thee, *Edmund*, to impart a business of Importance ; I knew thy loyal Heart is toucht to see the Cruelty of these ingratefull Daughters against our royal Master.

*Bast.* Most savage and Unnatural.

*Gloft.* This change in the State sits uneasie. The Commons re-pine aloud at their female Tyrants, already they cry out for the re-instalment of their good old King, whose Injuries I fear will inflame 'em into Mutiny.

*Bast.* 'Tis to be hop'd, not fear'd.

*Gloft.* Thou hast it Boy, 'tis to be hop'd indeed :  
On me they cast their Eyes, and hourly court me  
To lead 'em on ; and whilst this Head is mine  
I'm Theirs. A little covert Craft, my Boy,  
And then for open Action ; 'twill be Employment  
Worthy such honest daring Souls as Thine.

Thou *Edmund*, art my trusty Emissary,

Haste on the Spur at the first break of day

With these Dispatches to the Duke of *Combray* ;

You know what mortal Feuds have always flam'd

Between this Duke of *Cornwall's* Family, and his ;

Full Twenty thousand Mountainers

Th' inveterate Prince will send to our Assistance.

Dispatch ;



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Dispatch; Commend us to his Grace, and prosper.

*Bast.* Yes, credulous old Man,  
I will commend you to his Grace,  
His Grace the Duke of Cornwall—— instantly  
To shew him these Contents in thy own Character,  
And Seal'd with thy own Signet; then forthwith  
The Chol'rick Duke gives Sentence on thy Life;  
And to my hand thy vast Revenues fall,  
To glut my Pleasure that till now has starv'd.

*Gloster going off is met by Cordelia entring, Bastard observing at a Distance.*

*Cord.* Turn, *Gloster*, Turn, by th' sacred Pow'rs  
I do conjure you, give my Grievs a Hearing,  
You must, you shall, nay I am sure you will,  
For you were always styl'd the Just and Good.

*Gloft.* What woud'st thou, Princess? rise, and speak thy Grievs.

*Cord.* Nay, you shall promise to redress 'em too,  
Or here i'll kneel for ever; I entreat  
Thy succour for a Father, and a King,  
An injur'd Father, and an injur'd King.

*Bast.* O Charming Sorrow! how her Tears adorn her,  
Like Dew on Flow'rs, but she is vertuous,  
And I must quench this hopeless Fire i' th' Kindling.

*Gloft.* Consider, Princess,  
For whom thou begg'st, 'tis for the King that wrong'd Thee.

*Cord.* O name not that; he did not, cou'd not wrong me.  
Nay, muse not, *Gloster*, for it is too likely  
This injur'd King e'er this is past your Aid,  
And gone Distracted with his savage Wrongs.

*Bast.* I'll gaze no more,—— and yet my Eyes are charm'd.

*Cord.* Or, what if it be Worse?  
As 'tis too probable, this furious Night  
Has pierc'd his tender Body, the bleak Winds  
And cold Rain chill'd, or Lightning struck him Dead;  
If it be so, your Promise is discharg'd,  
And I have only one poor Boon to beg,  
That you'd convey me to his breathless Trunk,  
With my torn Robes to wrap his hoary Head,  
With my torn Hair to bind his Hands and Feet,  
Then with a show'r of Tears  
To wash his Clay-smear'd Cheeks, and dye beside him.

*Gloft.* Rise, fair *Cordelia*, thou hast Piety  
Enough t' attone for both thy Sisters Crimes.  
I have already plotted to restore

My



My injur'd Master, and thy Vertue tells me  
We shall succeed, and suddenly.

*Cord.* Dispatch, *Arante*,  
Provide me a Disguise, we'll instantly  
Go seek the King, and bring him some Relief.

*Ar.* How, Madam! Are you ignorant  
Of what your impious Sisters have decreed?  
Immediate Death for any that relieve him.

*Cord.* I cannot dread the Furies in this case.

*Ar.* In such a Night as this? Consider, Madam,  
For many Miles about there's scarce a Bush  
To shelter in.

*Cord.* Therefore no shelter for the King,  
And more our Charity to find him out:  
What have not Women dar'd for vicious Love,  
And wee'll be shining proofs that they can dare  
For Piety as much; blow Winds, and Lightnings fall,  
Bold in my Virgin Innocence, I'll flie  
My Royal Father to relieve, or dye.

*Bast.* Provide me a Disguise, we'll instantly  
Go seek the King:— ha! ha! a lucky change,  
That Vertue which I fear'd would be my hindrance,  
Has prov'd the Bond to my Design;  
I'll bribe two Ruffians shall at distance follow,  
And seise 'em in some desert Place; and there  
Whilst one retains her t' other shall return  
T' inform me where she's Lodg'd; I'll be disguis'd too.  
Whilst they are poching for me I'll to the Duke  
With these Dispatches, then to th' Field  
Where like the vig'rous Jove I will enjoy  
This Semele in a Storm, 'twill deaf her Cries  
Like Drums in Battel, lest her Groans should pierce  
My pittying Ear, and make the amorous Fight less fierce.

*Storm still. The Field Scene. Enter Lear and Kent.*

*Kent.* Here is the place, my Lord; good my Lord enter;  
The Tyranny of this open Night's too rough  
For Nature to endure.

*Lear.* Let me alone.

*Kent.* Good my Lord; enter.

*Lear.* Wilt break my Heart?

*Kent.* Beseech you, Sir,

*Lear.* Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentions Storm  
Invades us to the Skin; so 'tis to thee;  
But where the greater Malady is fixt,

The



The lesser is scarce felt : the Tempest in my Mind  
 Does from my Senses take all feeling else  
 Save what beats there. Filial Ingratitude !  
 Is it not as this Mouth shou'd tear this Hand  
 For lifting Food to't ? ——— But I'll punish ; home.  
 No, I will no more ; in such a Night  
 To shut me out. ——— Pour on, I will endure  
 In such a Night as this : O *Regan, Goneril* !  
 Your old kind Father, whose frank Heart gave all ;  
 O that way madness lies ; let me shun that ;  
 No more of that.

*Kent.* See, my Lord, here's the Entrance.

*Lear.* Well, I'll go in

And pass it all, I'll pray and then I'll sleep :  
 Poor naked Wretches, where'er you are,  
 That 'bide the pelting of this pitiless Storm.  
 How shall your houseless Heads and unfed Sides  
 Sustain this Shock ? your raggedness defend you  
 From Seasons such as these.  
 O ! I have ta'en too little Care of this,  
 Take Physick, Pomp,  
 Expose thy self to feel what Wretches feel,  
 That thou may'st cast the superfluous to them,  
 And shew the Heav'ns more just.

*Edgar in the Hovel.*

Five Fathom and a half, poor *Tom*.

*Kent.* What art thou that dost grumble there i' th' Straw ?  
 Come forth.

*Edg.* Away ! The foul Fiend follows me. ——— Through the  
 sharp Haw-thorn blows the cold Wind. ——— Mum, go to thy Bed  
 and warm Thee. ——— Ha ! What do I see ? By all my Grievs the  
 poor old King beheaded, [Aside,  
 And drencht in this fow Storm, professing Syren,  
 Are all your Protestations come to this ?

*Lear.* Tell me, Fellow, Didst thou give all to thy Daughters ?

*Edg.* Who gives any thing to poor *Tom*, whom the foul Fiend  
 has led through Fire, and through Flame, through Bushes, and Bogs ;  
 that has laid Knives under his Pillow, and Halts in his Pue ;  
 that has made him proud of Heart to ride on a Bay-trotting Horse  
 over four inch'd Bridges, to course his own Shadow for a Trai-  
 tour. ——— Bless thy five Wits. *Tom's* a cold. [Shivers.] Bless thee  
 from Whirlwinds, Star-blasting, and Taking : Doe poor *Tom* some  
 Charity, whom the foul Fiend vexes. ——— Sa, sa ; there I could  
 have him now, and there, and there agen.

E

*Lear.*



*Lear.* Have his Daughters brought him to this pass?  
 Could'st thou save Nothing? Didst thou give 'em all?

*Kent.* He has no Daughters, Sir.

*Lear.* Death, Traitor, nothing cou'd have subdu'd Nature  
 To such a Lowness, but his unkind Daughters.

*Edg.* Pillicock sat upon Pillicock Hill; Hallo, hallo, hallo.

*Lear.* Is it the fashion that discarded Fathers  
 Should have such little Mercy on their Flesh?  
 Judicious punishment, 'twas this Flesh begot  
 Those Pelicane Daughters.

*Edg.* Take heed of the fow Fiend; obey thy Parents; keep thy  
 Word justly; swear not; commit not with Man's sworn Spouse;  
 set not thy sweet Heart on proud Array: Tom's a Cold.

*Lear.* What hast thou been?

*Edg.* A Serving man proud of Heart, that curl'd my Hair,  
 us'd Perfume and Washes; that serv'd the Lust of my Mistresses  
 Heart, and did the Act of Darkness with her; swore as many  
 Oaths, as I spoke Words; and broke 'em all in the sweet Face of  
 Heaven: Let not the Paint, nor the Patch, nor the rushing of  
 Silks betray thy poor Heart to Woman; keep thy Foot out of  
 Brothels, thy Hand out of Plackets, thy Pen from Creditors  
 Books, and defie the foul Fiend. — Still through the Haw-  
 thorn blows the cold Wind. — Sess, Suum, Mun, Nonny,  
 Dolpin, my Boy! — Hift, the Boy! the Boy! Sefey! soft, let him  
 Trot by.

*Lear.* Death! thou wert better in thy Grave, than thus to an-  
 swer with thy uncover'd Body this Extremity of the Sky. And  
 yet consider him well, and Man's no more than This; Thou  
 art indebted to the Worm for no Silk, to the Beast for no Hide,  
 to the Cat for no Perfume. — Ha! here's Two of us are sophisti-  
 cated; Thou art the Thing it self, unaccommodated Man is no more  
 than such a poor bare fork'd Animal as thou art.  
 Off, Off, ye vain Disguises, empty Lendings,  
 I'll be my Original Self, quick, quick, uncase me.

*Kent.* Defend his Wits, good Heaven!

*Lear.* One point I had forgot; what's your Name?

*Edg.* Poor Tom, that eats the swimming Frog, the Wall nut,  
 and the Water-nut; that in the fury of his Heart, when the foul  
 Fiend rages, eats Cow-dung for Sallets, swallows the old Rat,  
 and the Ditch-dog, that drinks the green Mantle of the standing  
 Pool, that's whipt from Tithing to Tithing, that has three Suits  
 to his Back, Six Shirts to his Body,

Horse to Ride, and Weapon to wear,  
 But Rats and Mice, and such small Deer,  
 Have been Tom's Food for seven long Year.

Beware,



Beware, my Follower; Peace, Smulkin; Peace, thou foul Fiend.

*Lear.* One word more, but be sure true Counsel; tell me, Is a Madman a Gentleman, or a Yeomen?

*Kent.* I fear'd 't wou'd come to this; his Wits are gone.

*Edg.* *Fraterreo* calls me, and tells me, *Nero* is an Angler in the Lake of Darkness. Pray, *Innocent*, and beware the foul Fiend.

*Lear.* Right, ha! ha! was it not pleasant to have a Thousand with red hot Spits come hissing in upon 'em.

*Edg.* My Tears begin to take his part so much They marr my Counterfeiting. [*Aside.*]

*Lear.* The little Dogs and all, Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see they Bark at me.

*Edg.* *Tom* will throw his Head at 'em; Avaunt, ye Curs.

Be thy Mouth, or black or white,  
Tooth that poisons if it bite,  
Mastiff, Grey-hound, Mungrel, Grim,  
Hound, or Spanial, Brach, or H m,  
Bob-tail, Hight, or Trundle-tail,  
*Tom* will make 'em weep and wail,  
For with throwing thus my Head,  
Dogs leap the Hatch, and all are fled.

Ud, de, de, de, See, see, see. Come, march to Wakes, and Fairs, and Market-Towns.— Poor *Tom*, thy Horn is dry.

*Lear.* You, Sir, I entertain you for one of my Hundred, only I do not like the fashion of your Garments; you'll say they're Persian, but no matter, let 'em be chang'd.

*Enter Gloster.*

*Edg.* This is the foul *Flibertigibet*; he begins at Curfew, and walks at first Cock; he gives the Web, and the Pin; knits the Elf-lock; squints the Eye, and makes the Hair-lip; mildews the white Wheat, and hurts the poor Creature of the Earth;

*Switkin* footed Thrice the Cold,  
He met the Night-mare and her Nine-fold,  
'Twas there he did appoint her;  
He bid her alight, and her Troth plight,  
And arroynt the Witch, arroynt her.

*Gloster.* What, has your Grace no better Company?

*Edg.* The Prince of Darkness is a Gentleman; *Modo* he is call'd, and *Mabu*.



*Gloft.* Go with me, Sir, hard by I have a Tenent.  
My Duty cannot suffer me to obey in all your Daughters hard  
Commands, who have enjoyn'd me to make fast my Doors, and  
let this Tyrannous Night take hold upon you. Yet have I ven-  
tur'd to come seek you out, and bring you where both Fire and  
Food is ready.

*Kent.* Good my Lord, take his offer.

*Lear.* First let me talk with this Philosopher,  
Say, *Staggerite*, what is the Cause of Thunder.

*Gloft.* Beseech you, Sir, go with me.

*Lear.* I'll take a Word with this fame Learned *Thebanism*.  
What is your Study?

*Edg.* How to prevent the Fiend, and to kill Vermin.

*Lear.* Let me ask you a Word in private.

*Kent.* His Wits are quite unsettled; Good Sir, let's force him  
hence.

*Gloft.* Canst blame him? His Daughters seek his Death; This  
Bedlam but disturbs him the more. Fellow, be gone.

*Edg.* Child *Rowland* to the dark Towre came,  
His Word, was still Fi, Fo, and Fum,  
I smell the Bloud of a British-Man. — Oh! Torture! [Exit.]

*Gloft.* Now, I prithee Friend, let's take him in our Arms,  
and carry him where he shall meet both Welcome, and Pro-  
tection.

Good Sir, along with us.

*Lear.* You say right; let 'em anatomize *Regan*, see what breeds  
about her Heart; is there any Cause in Nature for these  
hard Hearts?

*Kent.* Beseech your Grace.

*Lear.* Hift! — make no Noife, make no Noife — so so;  
we'll to Supper i' th' Morning. [Exeunt.]

Enter Cordelia and Arante.

*Ar.* Dear Madam, rest ye here, our search is vain,  
Look, here's a shed; beseech ye, enter here.

*Gord.* Prethee go in thy self, seek thy own Ease,  
Where the Mind's free, the Body's delicate:  
This Tempest but diverts me from the thought  
Of what would hurt me more.

Enter Two Ruffians.

1. *Ruff.* We have dodg'd em far enough, this Place is private,  
I'll keep 'em Prisoners here within this Hovel,  
Whilst you return and bring Lord *Edmund* hither;

But



## 29

[Shows Gold.

[They seize Cordelia and Arante, who shriek out.]

**Enter Edgar.**

[Drives 'em with his Quarter-staff.

[Rub off.]

Thus left him.

[Affide.]

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*Edg.* The King, her Father, whom she's come to seek, *[Exit]*  
Through all the Terrours of this Night: O Gods!  
That such amazing Piety, such Tenderness  
Shou'd yet to me be Cruel. —  
Yes, fair One, such a One was lately here,  
And is convey'd by some that came to seek him,  
T' a nighb'ring Cottage; but distinctly where,  
I know not.

*Cord.* Blessings on 'em,  
Let's find him out, *Arante*, for thou seest  
We are in Heavens Protection.

*[Going off.]*

*Edg.* O *Cordelia*!

*Cord.* Ha! — Thou knowst my Name.

*Edg.* As you did once know *Edgar's*.

*Cord.* *Edgar*!

*Edg.* The poor Remains of *Edgar*, what your Scorn  
Has left him.

*Cord.* Do we wake, *Arante*?

*Edg.* My Father seeks my Life, which I preserv'd

In hopes of some blest Minute to oblige

Distrest *Cordelia*, and the Gods have giv'n it;

That Thought alone prevail'd with me to take

This Frantrick Dress, to make the Earth my Bed,

With these bare Limbs all change of Seasons bide,

Noons scorching Heat, and Midnights piercing Cold,

To feed on Offals, and to drink with Herds,

To combat with the Winds, and be the Sport

Of Clowns, or what's more wretched yet, their Pity.

*Ar.* Was ever Tale so full of Misery!

*Edg.* But such a Fall as this I grant was due

To my aspiring Love, for 'twas presumptuous.

Though not presumptuously pursu'd;

For well you know I wore my Flames conceal'd,

And silent as the Lamps that burn in Tombs,

'Till you perceiv'd my Grief, with modest Grace

Drew forth the Secret, and then seal'd my Pardon.

*Cord.* You had your Pardon, nor can you challenge more.

*Edg.* What do I Challenge more?

Such Vanity agrees not with these Rags;

When in my prosp'rous State, rich *Gloster's* Heir,

You silenc'd my Pretences, and enjoyn'd me

To trouble you upon that Theme no more;

Then what Reception must Love's Language find

From these bare Limbs and Beggars humble Weeds?

*Cord.* Such as the Voice of Pardon to a Wretch condemn'd;

Such



Such as the Shouts  
Of succ'ring Forces to a Town besieg'd.

Edg. Ah! What new Method now of Cruelty!

Cord. Come to my Arms, thou dearest, best of Men,  
And take the kindest Vows that e'er were spoke  
By a protesting Maid.

Edg. Is't possible?

Cord. By the dear Vital Stream that bathes my Heart,  
These hallowed Rags of Thine, and naked Vertue,  
These abject Tassels, these fantastick Shreds,  
(Ridiculous ev'n to the meanest Clown)  
To me are dearer than the richest Pomp  
Of purple Monarchs.

Edg. Generous charming Maid,  
The Gods alone that made, can rate thy Worth!  
This most amazing Excellence shall be  
Fame's Triumph in succeeding Ages, when  
Thy bright Example shall adorn the Scene,  
And teach the World Perfection.

Cord. Cold and Weary,  
We'll rest a while, Arante, on that Straw,  
Then forward to find out the poor Old King.

Edg. Look I have Flint and Steel, the Implements  
Of wandring Lunaticks; I'll strike a Light,  
And make a Fire beneath this Shed, to dry  
Thy Storm-drencht Garments, e'er thou lie to rest thee;  
Then Fierce and Wakefull as th' Hesperian Dragon,  
I'll watch beside thee to protect thy Sleep;  
Mean while the Stars shall dart their kindest Beams,  
And Angels visit my Cordelia's Dreams

[Exeunt.]

SCENE, The Palace.

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Bastard, Servants. Cornwall with  
Gloster's Letters.

Duke. I will have my Revenge e'er I depart his House.

Regan, see here, a Plot upon our State,  
'Tis Gloster's Character, that has betray'd  
His double Trust of Subject, and of Host.

Reg. Then double be our Vengeance, this confirms  
Th' Intelligence that we now receiv'd,  
That he has been this Night to seek the King;  
But who, Sir, was the kind Discoverer?

Duke.



*Duke.* Our *Eagle*, quick to spy, and fierce to seize, and as the  
Our trusty *Edmund*.

*Reg.* 'Twas a noble Service;  
O *Cornwall*, take him to thy deepest Trust,  
And wear him as a Jewel at thy Heart.

*Bast.* Think, Sir, how hard a Fortune I sustain,  
That makes me thus repent of serving you!  
O that this Treason had not been, or I  
Not the Discoverer. [Weeps.]

*Duke.* *Edmund*, Thou shalt find  
A Father in our Love, and from this Minute  
We call thee Earl of *Gloster*; but there yet  
Remains another Justice to be done,  
And that's to punish this discarded Traitor;  
But lest thy tender Nature should relent,  
At his just Sufferings, nor brook the Sight,  
We wish thee to withdraw.

*Reg.* The Grotto, Sir, within the lower Grove, *To Edmund*  
Has Privacy to suit a Mourner's Thought. *Aside.*

*Bast.* And there I may expect a Comforter,  
Ha, Madam?

*Reg.* What may happen, Sir, I know not,  
But 'twas a Friends Advice. [Ex. Bastard.]

*Duke.* Bring in the Traitor.

*Gloster brought in.*

Bind fast his Arms.

*Gloft.* What mean your Graces?  
You are my Guests, pray do me no foul Play.

*Duke.* Bind him, I say, hard, harder yet.

*Reg.* Now Traitor, thou shalt find——

*Duke.* Speak, Rebel, where hast thou sent the King?  
Whom spight of our Decree thou saw'st last Night.

*Gloft.* I'm tide to th' Stake, and I must stand the Course.

*Reg.* Say where, and why thou hast conceal'd him.

*Gloft.* Because I wou'd not see thy cruel Hands  
Tear out his poor old Eyes, nor thy fierce Sister  
Carve his annointed Flesh; but I shall see  
The swift wing'd Vengeance overtake such Children.

*Duke.* See't thou shalt never; Slaves perform your Work,  
Out with those treacherous Eyes; dispatch, I say,  
If thou see'st Vengeance——

*Gloft.* He that will think to live till he be old,  
Give me some help. — O cruel! oh! ye Gods.

[They put out his Eyes.  
Serv.]



*Serv.* Hold, hold, my Lord, I bar your Cruelty,  
I cannot love your safety and give way  
To such a barbarous Practice.

*Duke.* Ha! my Villain.

*Serv.* I have been your Servant from my Infancy,  
But better Service have I never done you  
Than with this Boldness.—

*Duke.* Take thy Death, Slave.

*Serv.* Nay, then Revenge whilst yet my Bloud is Warm.

[*Fight.*

*Reg.* Help here.—Are you not hurt, my Lord?

*Gloft.* Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of Nature  
To quit this horrid Act.

*Reg.* Out, treacherous Villain,  
Thou call'st on him that hates thee, it was He  
That broacht thy Treason, shew'd us thy Dispatches;  
There,—read, and save the *Cambrian* Prince a Labour:  
If thy Eyes fail thee call for Spectacles.

*Gloft.* O my Folly!

Then *Edgar* was abus'd, kind Gods, forgive me that.

*Reg.* How is't, my Lord?

*Duke.* Turn out that Eye-less Villain, let him smell  
His way to *Cambry*, throw this Slave upon a Dunghill.

*Regan.* I bleed apace, give me your Arm.

*Gloft.* All dark, and comfortless!

Where are those various Objects that but now  
Employ'd my busie Eyes? where those Eyes?  
Dead are their piercing Rays that lately shot  
O'er flowry Vales to distant Sunny Hills,  
And drew with Joy the vast Horizon in.  
These groping Hands are now my only Guides,  
And Feeling all my Sight.

O Misery! what words can sound my Grief?  
Shut from the Living whilst amongst the Living;  
Dark as the Grave amidst the bustling World.  
At once from Business, and from Pleasure barr'd;  
No more to view the Beauty of the Spring,  
Nor see the Face of Kindred, or of Friend,  
Yet still one way th' extremest Fate affords,  
And ev'n the Blind can find the way to Death.  
Must I then tamely dye, and unreveng'd?  
So *Lear* may fall: No, with these bleeding Rings  
I will present me to the pitying Crowd,  
And with the Rhetorick of these dropping Veins  
Enflame 'em to revenge their King and me;  
Then when the Glorious Mischief is on Wing,

F

This



This Lumber from some Precipice I'll throw,  
 And dash it on the ragged Flint below;  
 Whence my freed Soul to her bright Sphere shall fly,  
 Through boundless Orbs, eternal Regions spy,  
 And like the Sun, be all one glorious Eye.

[Ex.]

*End of the Third Act.*

## ACT IV.

## A Grotto.

*Edmund and Regan amorously Seated, listening to Musick.*

*Bast.* **W**H Y were those Beauties made another's Right,  
 Which none can prize like Me? Charming Queen,  
 Take my blooming Youth, for ever fold me  
 In those soft Arms, Lull me in endless Sleep,  
 That I may dream of Pleasures too transporting  
 For Life to bear.

*Reg.* Live, live, my *Gloster*,  
 And feel no Death but that of swooning joy;  
 I yield thee Bliss on no harder Terms  
 Than that thou continue to be Happy.

*Bast.* This Jealousie is yet more kind, is't possible  
 That I should wander from a Paradise  
 To feed on sickly Weeds? Such Sweets live here  
 That Constancy will be no Vertue in me:  
 And yet must I forthwith go meet her Sister,  
 To whom I must protest as much, —  
 Suppose it be the same; why, best of all,  
 And I have then my Lesson already conn'd.

[Aside.]

*Reg.* Wear this Remembrance of me. — I dare now

[Gives him a Ring.]

Absent my self no longer from the Duke,  
 Whose Wound grows dangerous, — I hope Mortal.

*Bast.* And let this happy Image of your *Gloster*,

[Pulling out a Picture, drops a Note.]

Lodge in that Breast where all his Treasure lies.

[Exit.]

*Reg.* To this brave youth a Woman's blooming Beauties  
 Are due; my Fool usurps my Bed. — What's here?  
 Confusion on my Eyes.

[Reads.]

Where



*Where Merit is so Transparent, not to behold it were Blindness, and not to reward it; Ingratitude.*

Goneril.

Vexatious Accident ! yet Fortunate too,  
My Jealousie's confirm'd, and I am taught  
To cast for my Defence——

[Enter an Officer.

Now, what mean those Shouts ? and what thy hasty Entrance ?

Off. A most surprizing and a sudden Change,  
The Pefants are all up in Mutiny,  
And only want a Chief to lead 'em on  
To storm your Palace.

Reg. On what Provocation ?

Off. At last day's publick Festival, to which  
The Yeomen from all Quarters had repair'd,  
Old *Gloster*, whom you late depriv'd of Sight,  
(His Veins yet streaming fresh,) presents himself,  
Proclaims your Cruelty, and their Oppression,  
With the King's injuries ; which so enrag'd 'em,  
That now that Mutiny which long had crept  
Takes wing, and threatens your best Pow'rs.

Reg. White-liver'd Slave !

Our Forces rais'd and led by Valiant *Edmund*,  
Shall drive this Monster of Rebellion back  
To her dark Cell ; young *Gloster's* Arm allays  
The Storm, his Father's feeble Breath did rise.

[Exit.

*The Field* SCENE, Enter *Edgar*.

Edg. The lowest and most abject Thing of Fortune  
Stands still in Hope, and is secure from Fear ;  
The lamentable Change is from the Best,  
The Worst returns to Better.—Who comes here ?

[Enter *Gloster*, led by an old Man.

My Father poorly led ! depriv'd of Sight !  
The precious Stones torn from their bleeding Rings !  
Something I heard of this inhumane Deed,  
But disbeliev'd it, as an Act too horrid  
For the hot Hell of a curst Woman's fury ;  
When will the measure of my woes be full ?

*Gloster*. Revenge, thou art on foot, Success attend Thee.  
Well have I sold my Eyes, if the Event  
Prove happy for the injur'd King.

Old M. O, my good Lord, I have been your Tenent, and your  
Father's Tenent these Fourscore years.

*Gloster*. Away, get thee Away, good Friend be gone,



Thy Comforts can doe me no good at All,  
Thee they may hurt.

*Old M.* You cannot see your Way.

*Gloft.* I have no Way, and therefore want no Eyes,  
I stumbled when I saw : O dear Son *Edgar*,  
The Food of thy abused Father's Wrath,  
Might I but live to see thee in my Touch  
I'd say, I had Eyes agen.

*Edg.* Alas, he's sensible that I was wrong'd,  
And shou'd I own my Self, his tender Heart  
Would break betwixt th' extremes of Grief and Joy.

*Old M.* How now, who's There?

*Edg.* A Charity for poor *Tom*. Play fair, and defie the foul  
Fiend.

O Gods ! and must I still pursue this Trade,  
Trifling beneath such Loads of Misery ?

[*Aside.*

*Old M.* 'Tis poor mad *Tom*.

*Gloft.* In the late Storm, I such a Fellow saw,  
Which made me think a Man a Worm,  
Where is the Lunatick ?

*Old M.* Here, my Lord.

*Gloft.* Get thee now away, if for my sake  
Thou wilt oe'r-take us hence a Mile or Two  
I' th' way tow'rd *Dover*, do't for ancient Love,  
And bring some cov'ring for this naked Wretch  
Whom I'll intreat to lead me.

*Old M.* Alack, my Lord, He's Mad.

*Gloft.* 'Tis the Time's Plague when Mad-men lead the Blind.  
Doe as I bid thee.

*Old M.* I'll bring him the best 'Parrel that I have  
Come on't what will.

[*Exit.*

*Gloft.* Sirrah, naked Fellow.

*Edg.* Poor *Tom*'s a cold ; ——— I cannot fool it longer,  
And yet I must. ——— Bless thy sweet Eyes, they Bleed ;  
Beleive't poor *Tom* ev'n weeps his blind to see 'em.

*Gloft.* Know'st thou the way to *Dover* ?

*Edg.* Both Stile and Gate, Horse-way and Foot-path, poor *Te*  
has been scar'd out of his good Wits ; bless every true Man's Son  
from the foul Fiend.

*Gloft.* Here, take this Purse ; that I am wretched  
Makes thee the Happier, Heav'n deal so still.  
Thus let the griping Usurers Hoard be scatter'd,  
So Distribution shall undoe Excess,  
And each Man have enough. Dost thou know *Dover* ?

*Edg.* Ay, Master.

*Gloft.* There's a Cliff, whose high and bending Head

Looks



# KING LEAR.

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Looks dreadfully down on the roaring Deep.  
Bring me but to the very Brink of it,  
And I'll repair the Poverty thou bear'st  
With something Rich about me, from that Place  
I shall no leading need.

*Edg.* Give me thy Arm : poor Tom shall guide thee.

*Gloft.* Soft, for I hear the Tread of Passengers.

*Enter Kent and Cordelia.*

*Cord.* Ah me ! your Fear's too true, it was the King ;  
I spoke but now with some that met him  
As mad as the vex'd Sea, Singing aloud,  
Crown'd with rank Femiter, and furrow Weeds,  
With Berries, Burdocks, Violets, Dazies, Poppies,  
And all the idle Flowres that grow  
In our sustaining Corn, conduct me to him  
To prove my last Endeavours to restore him  
And Heav'n so prosper thee.

*Kent.* I will, good Lady.

Ha, *Gloster* here ! — Turn, poor dark Man, and hear  
A Friend's Condolent, who at sight of thine  
Forgets his own Distress, thy old true *Kent*.

*Gloft.* How, *Kent* ? From whence return'd ?

*Kent.* I have not since my Banishment been absent,  
But in Disguise follow'd th' abandon'd King ;  
'Twas me thou saw'st with him in the late Storm.

*Gloft.* Let me embrace thee, had I Eyes, I now  
Should weep for Joy ; but let this trickling Bloud  
Suffice instead of Tears.

*Cord.* O Misery !

To whom shall I complain, or in what Language ?  
Forgive, O wretched Man, the Piety  
That brought thee to this pass ; 'twas I that caus'd it ;  
I cast me at thy feet and beg of thee  
To crush these weeping Eyes to equal Darknes,  
If that will give thee any Recompense.

*Edg.* Was ever Season so distress'd as This ?

*Gloft.* I think *Cordelia's* Voice ! rise pious Princess,  
And take a dark Man's Blessing.

*Cord.* O, my *Edgar* !

My Vertue's now grown Guilty, works the Bane  
Of those that do befriend me, Heav'n forsakes me,  
And when you look that Way, it is but Just  
That you shou'd hate me too.

*Edg.* O wave this cutting Speech, and spare to wound

[*Aside.*]



A Heart that's on the Rack.

*Gloft.* No longer cloud thee, *Kent* in that disguise,  
There's business for thee and of noblest weight ;  
Our injur'd Country is at length in Arms,  
Urg'd by the King's inhumane Wrongs and Mine,  
And only want a Chief to lead 'em on.  
That Task be thine.

*Edg.* Brave *Britains*, then there's Live in't yet.

[*Aside.*

*Kent.* Then have we one cast for our Fortune yet.  
Come, Princess, I'll bestow you with the King,  
Then on the Spur to head these Forces.  
Farewell, good *Gloster*, to our Conduct trust.

*Gloft.* And be your Cause as Prosp'rous as 'tis Just. [Exit.

*Goneril's Palace. Enter Goneril, Attendants.*

*Gon.* It was great Ignorance, *Gloster's* Eyes being out,  
To let him live, where he arrives he moves  
All Hearts against us ; *Edmund* I think is gone,  
In pity to his Misery, to dispatch him.

*Gent.* No, Madam, he's return'd on speedy Summons  
Back to your Sister.

*Gon.* Ha ! I like not That,  
Such speed must have the Wings of Love ; where's *Albany*.

*Gent.* Madam, within, but never Man so chang'd ;  
I told him of the uproar of the Peasants,  
He smil'd at it, when I inform'd him  
Of *Gloster's* Treason. —

*Gon.* Trouble him no farther,  
It is his coward Spirit ; back to our Sister,  
Hasten her Musters, and let her know  
I have giv'n the Distaff into my Husband's Hands.  
That done, with special Care deliver these Dispatches  
In private to young *Gloster*.

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* O Madam, most unseasonable News,  
The Duke of *Cornwal's* dead of his late Wound,  
Whose loss your Sister has in part supply'd,  
Making brave *Edmund* General of her Forces.

*Gon.* One way I like this well ;  
But being Widow, and my *Gloster* with her,  
May blast the promis'd Harvest of our Love.  
A word more, Sir, — add Speed to your Journey,

And



# KING LEAR.

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And if you chance to meet with that blind Traitor,  
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

[*Exeunt.*]

## *Field* SCENE. Gloster and Edgar.

*Gloster.* When shall we come to th' Top of that same Hill?

*Edgar.* We climb it now, mark how we labour.

*Gloster.* Methinks the Ground is even

*Edgar.* Horrible Steep; heark, do you hear the Sea?

*Gloster.* No truly.

*Edgar.* Wy then your other Senses grow imperfect  
By your Eyes Anguish.

*Gloster.* So may it be indeed:

Methinks thy Voice is alter'd, and thou speak'st  
In better Phrase and Matter than thou did'st.

*Edgar.* You are much deceiv'd, in nothing am I alter'd;  
But in my Garments.

*Gloster.* Methinks y' are better spoken.

*Edgar.* Come on, Sir, here's the Place, how fearfull  
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's Eyes so low.  
The Crows and Choughs that wing the mid-way Air  
Shew scarce so big as Beetles, half way down  
Hangs one that gathers Samphire, dreadfull Trade!  
The Fisher-men that walk upon the Beach  
Appear like Mice, and yon tall anch'ring Barque.  
Seems lessen'd to her Cock, her Cock a Buoy  
Almost too small for Sight; the murmuring Surge  
Cannot be heard so high, I'll look no more  
Lest my Brain turn, and the disorder make me  
Tumble down head-long.

*Gloster.* Set me where you stand.

*Edgar.* You are now within a Foot of th' extreme Verge.  
For all beneath the Moon I wou'd not now  
Leap forward.

*Gloster.* Let go my Hand,  
Here, Friend, is another Purse, in it a Jewel  
Well worth a poor Man's taking; get thee farther,  
Bid me Farewel, and let me hear thee going.

*Edgar.* Fare you well, Sir. — That I do trifle thus  
With this his Despair is with Design to cure it.

*Gloster.* Thus, mighty Gods, this World I do renounce;  
And in your Sight shake my Afflictions off;  
If I cou'd bear 'em longer and not fall  
To quarrel with your great opposeless Wills,  
My Snuff and feebler Part of Nature shou'd  
Burn it self out; if *Edgar* lived, O, Bless him.

Now,



Now, Fellow, fare thee well.

*Edg.* Gone, Sir, Farewell.

And yet I know not how my Conceit may rob  
The Treasury of Life, had he been where he thought,  
By this had Thought been past. — Alive, or Dead?

Hoa Sir, Friend; hear you, Sir, Speak. —

Thus might he pass indeed, — yet he revives.

What are you, Sir?

*Gloft.* Away, and let me dye.

*Edg.* Hadst thou been ought but Gosmore Feathers Air,  
Falling so many Fathom down,  
Thou hadst shiver'd like an Egg; but thou dost breath,  
Hast heavy Substance, bleed't? Not Speak! Art sound?  
Thy Life's a Miracle.

*Gloft.* But have I faln or no?

*Edg.* From the dread Summit of this chalky Bourn:  
Look up an Height, the Shril-tun'd Lark so high  
Cannot be seen, or heard; do but look up.

*Gloft.* Alack, I have no Eyes.

Is wretchedness depriv'd that Benefit  
To end it self by Death?

*Edg.* Give me your Arm.

Up; so, how is't? Feel you your Legs? You stand.

*Gloft.* Too well, too well.

*Edg.* Upon the Crow o' th' Cliff, what Thing was that  
Which parted from you?

*Gloft.* A poor unfortunate Beggar.

*Edg.* As I stood here below, me-thought his Eyes  
Were two full Moons, wide Nostrils breathing Fire.  
It was some Fiend, therefore thou happy Father,  
Think that th' all-powerfull Gods, who make them Honours  
Of Mens Impossibilities, have preserv'd thee.

*Gloft.* 'Tis wonderfull; henceforth I'll bear Affliction  
Till it expire; the Goblin which you speak of,  
I took it for a Man: oft-times 'twould say,  
The Fiend, the Fiend: He led me to that Place.

*Edg.* Bear free and patient Thoughts: but who comes here?

*Enter Lear, a Coronet of Flowers on his Head; Wreaths,  
and Garlands about him.*

*Lear.* No, no; they cannot touch me for Coyning; I am the  
King himself.

*Edg.* O piercing Sight.

*Lear.* Nature's above Art in that Respect; There's your Prefs-  
money: That fellow handles his Bow like a Cow-keeper; —

Draw



Draw me a Clothier's yard! A Mouse, a Mouse, peace, ho!  
There's my Gauntlet; I'll prove it on a Giant. Bring up the brown  
Bills: O well flown Bird; i' th' White, i' th' White.——Heugh!  
give the Word.

*Edg.* Sweet *Marjoram*.

*Lear.* Pass.

*Gloft.* I know that Voice.

*Lear.* Ha!—*Goneril* with a white Beard! they flatter'd me like a  
Dog, and told me I had white hairs on my Chin, before the Black  
ones were there; to say ay and no to every thing that I said: Ay  
and no too was no good Divinity. When the Ram came once to  
wet me, and the Winds to make me chatter; when the Thunder  
wou'd not peace at my Bidding. There I found 'em, there I smelt  
'em out; go too, they are not men of their words; They told me I  
was a King; 'tis a Lye, I am not Ague proof.

*Gloft.* That Voice I well remember, it's not the King's.

*Lear.* Ay, every Inch a King, when I do Stare  
See how the Subject quakes.  
I pardon that Man's Life; what was the Cause?  
Adultery? Thou shalt not dye. Dye for Adultery!  
The Wren goes to't, and the small gilded Flie  
Engenders in my Sight; Let Copulation thrive;  
For *Gloster's* Bastard Son was kinder to his Father  
Then were my Daughters got i' th' Lawfull Bed.  
To't Luxury, Pell-mell, for I lack Soldiers.

*Gloft.* Not all my Sorrows past so deep have toucht me,  
As the sad Accents: Sight were now a Torment.——

*Lear.* Behold that simp'ring Lady, she that starts  
At Pleasure's Name, and thinks her Ear profan'd  
With the least wanton Word; wou'd you believe it,  
The Fitcher, nor the pamper'd Steed goes to't  
With such a riotous Appetite: Down from the Waste they are Cen-  
taurs, though Women all above; but to the Girdle do the Gods in-  
herit, beneath is all the Fiends; There's Hell, there's Darknes,  
the Sulphurous unfathom'd.——Fie! fie! pah!——an Ounce  
of Civet, good Apothecary, to sweeten my Imagination.——There's  
Money for thee.

*Gloft.* Let me kifs that Hand.

*Lear.* Let me wipe it first; it smells of Mortality.

*Gloft.* Speak, Sir; Do you know me?

*Lear.* I Remember thy Eyes well enough: Nay, doe thy worst,  
blind *Cupid*, I'll not love.——Read me this Challenge, mark but the  
penning of it.

*Gloft.* Were all the Letters Suns, I cou'd not see.

*Edg.* I wou'd not take this from Report; wretched *Cordelia*!  
What will thy Vertue doe when thou shalt find



This fresh Affliction added to the Tale  
Of thy unparallel'd Grievs.

*Lear.* Read.

*Gloster.* What ! with this Case of Eyes ?

*Lear.* O ho ! Are you there with me ? No Eyes in your Head,  
and no money in your Purse ? Yet you see how this world goes.

*Gloster.* I see it feelingly.

*Lear.* What ! Art Mad ? A Man may see how this World goes  
with no Eyes. Look with thy Ears ; see how yond Justice rails on  
that simple Thief ; shake 'em together, and the first that drops, be  
it Thief or Justice, is a Villain. — Thou hast seen a Farmer's Dog  
bark at a Begger.

*Gloster.* Ay, Sir.

*Lear.* And the Man ran from the Curr ; there thou might'st be-  
hold the great Image of Authority ; a Dog's obey'd in Office. Thou  
Rascal, Beadle, hold up thy Bloudy Hand ; Why dost thou lash that  
Strumpet ? Thou hotly lust'st to enjoy her in that kind, for which  
thou whipst her ; doe, doe, the Judge that sentenc'd her has been be-  
fore-hand with thee.

*Gloster.* How stiff is my vile Sense, that yields not yet ?

*Lear.* I tell thee the Usurer hangs the Couz'ner, through tatter'd  
Robes small Vices do appear ; Robes, and Furr-gowns hide All :  
Place Sins with Gold ; why there 'tis for thee, my Friend, make  
much of it ; it has the Pow'r to seal the Accuser's Lips. Get thee  
glass Eyes, and like a scurvy Politician, seem to see the Things thou  
dost not. Pull, pull off my Boots ; hard, harder ; so, so.

*Gloster.* O Matter and Impertinency mixt !  
Reason in Madnes.

*Lear.* If thou wilt weep my Fortunes take my Eyes,  
I know thee well enough, thy name is *Gloster*.  
Thou must be patient, we come Crying hither  
Thou know'st, the first time that we taste the Air  
We Wail and Cry, — P'll preach to thee, Mark.

*Edg.* Break lab'ring Heart.

*Lear.* When we are born we Cry that we are come  
To this great Stage of Fools. —

*Enter Two or Three Gentlemen.*

*Gent.* O ! here he is ; lay hand upon him, Sir :  
Your dearest Daughter sends —

*Lear.* No Rescue ? What ! a Prisoner ? I am even the natural  
Fool of Fortune : Use me well, you shall have Ransome. — Let me  
have Surgeons ; O ! I am cut to th' Brains.

*Gent.* You shall have any Thing.

*Lear.* No Second's ? All my Self ? I will dye bravely like a smug  
Bride.



Bridegroom, flusht and pamper'd as a Priest's Whore. I am a King, my Masters, know ye that?

*Gent.* You are a Royal one, and we obey you.

*Lear.* It were an excellent Stratageme to shoe a Troop of Horse with Felt, I'll put in proof — no Noise, no Noise. — Now will we steal upon these Sons in Law, and then — Kill, kill, kill, kill!

[*Ex. Running.*]

*Gloft.* A Sight most moving in the meanest Wretch, Past speaking in a King. Now, good Sir, what are you?

*Edg.* A most poor Man made tame to Fortune's strokes, And prone to pity by experienc'd Sorrows; give me your Hand.

*Gloft.* You ever gentle Gods take my Breath from me, And let not my ill Genius tempt me more To dye before you please.

*Enter Goneril's Gentleman-Usher.*

*Gent.* A Proclaim'd Prize, O most happily met, That Eye-less Head of thine was first fram'd Flesh To raise my Fortunes; Thou old unhappy Traitor, The Sword is out that must destroy thee.

*Gloft.* Now let thy friendly Hand put Strength enough to't.

*Gent.* Wherefore, bold Pefant, Darst thou support a publish'd Traitor hence, Lest I destroy Thee too. Let go his Arm.

*Edg.* Chill not let go Zir, without vurther 'Casion.

*Gent.* Let go Slave, or thou dyest.

*Edg.* Good Gentleman go your Gate, and let poor Volk pass; and 'Chu'd ha' bin' Zwagger'd out of my Life, it wou'd not a bin zo long as 'tis by a Vort-night. — Nay, an' thou com'st near th' old Man, I'll try whether your Costard or my Ballow be th' harder.

*Gent.* Our Dunghil.

*Edg.* 'Chill pick your Teeth, Zir; Come, no matter Voines.

*Gent.* Slave, thou hast Slain me; Oh untimely Death!

*Edg.* I know thee well, a serviceable Villain, As duteous to the Vices of thy Mistress, As Lust cou'd wish.

*Gloft.* What! is he Dead?

*Edg.* Sit you, Sir, and rest you. This is a Letter Carrier and may have Some Papers of Intelligence, that may stand Our Party in good stead to know. — What's here?

[*Takes a Letter out of his Pocket; opens, and reads.*]



To Edmund Earl of Gloster.

*Let our Mutual Loves be remembered, you have many opportunities to cut him Off. If he return the Conqueror, then I am still a Prisoner, and his Bed my Gaol; from the loath'd Warmth of which deliver me, and supply the Place for your Labour.*

Goneril.

A Plot upon her Husband's Life,  
And the Exchange my Brother! — Here i'th' Sands  
I'll rake thee up, thou Messenger of Lust,  
Griev'd only that thou hadst no other Deaths-man.  
In Time and Place convenient I'll produce  
These Letters to the Sight of th' injur'd Duke,  
As best shall serve our Purpose; Come, your Hand.  
Far off methinks I hear the beaten Drum,  
Come, Sir, I will bestow you with a Friend.

[*Exeunt.*]

*A Chamber. Lear a Sleep on a Couch; Cordelia, and Attendants standing by him.*

*Cord.* His Sleep is sound, and may have good Effect  
To cure his jarring Senses, and repair  
This Breach of Nature.

*Phys.* We have employ'd the utmost Row'r of Art,  
And this deep Rest will perfect our Design.

*Cord.* O Regan, Goneril! Inhumane Sisters,  
Had he not been your Father, these white Hairs  
Had challeng'd sure some pity? Was this a Face  
To be expos'd against the jarring Winds?  
My Enemy's Dog though he had bit me shou'd  
Have stood that Night against my Fire — he wakes, speak to him.

*Gent.* Madam, do you, 'tis fittest.

*Cord.* How do's my Royal Lord? How fares your Majesty?

*Lear.* You doe me wrong to take me out o'th' Grave.  
Ha! Is this too a World of Cruelty?  
I know my Privilege, think not that I will  
Be us'd like a wretched Mortal; no,  
No more of That.

*Cord.* Speak to me, Sir, whom am I?

*Lear.* Your are a Soul in Blifs, but I am bound  
Upon a wheel of Fire, which my own Tears  
Do scald like Molten Lead.

*Cord.* Sir, do you know me?

*Lear.* You are a Spirit, I know; Where did you Dye?

*Cord.* Still, still, far wide.

*Phys.* Madam, he's scarce awake; he'll soon grow more compos'd.

*Lear.*



*Lear.* Where have I been? Where am I? Fair Day-light!  
I am mightily abus'd, I shou'd even dye with pity  
To see another thus. I will not fwear  
These are my Hands.

*Cord.* O look upon me, Sir,  
And hold your Hands in Blessing o'er me; nay,  
You must not kneel.

*Lear.* Pray do not mock me.  
I am a very foolish fond old Man,  
Fourscore and upward; and to deal plainly with you,  
I fear I am not in my perfect Mind.

*Cord.* Nay, then farewell to Patience; witness for me  
Ye mighty Pow'rs, I ne'er complain'd till now!

*Lear.* Methinks I shou'd know you, and know this Man,  
Yet I am doubtfull, for I am mainly ignorant;  
What Place this is, and all the skill I have  
Remembers not these Garments; nor do I know  
Where I did sleep last Night.—— Pray do not mock me——  
For, as I am a Man, I think that Lady  
To be my Child *Cordelia*.

*Cord.* O my dear, dear Father!

*Lear.* Be your Tears wet? Yes faith; pray do not weep,  
I know I have giv'n thee Cause, and am so humbled  
With Crosses since, that I cou'd ask  
Forgiveness of thee, were it possible  
That thou cou'dst grant it; but I'm well assur'd  
Thou canst not; therefore I do stand thy Justice;  
If thou hast Poison for me I will drink it,  
Bless thee, and dye.

*Cord.* O pity, Sir, a bleeding Heart, and cease  
This killing Language.

*Lear.* Tell me, Friends, where am I?

*Gent.* In your own Kingdom, Sir.

*Lear.* Do not abuse me.

*Gent.* Be comforted, good Madam, for the Violence  
Of his Distemper's past; we'll lead him in,  
Nor trouble him, till he is better settled.  
Wilt please you, Sir, walk into freer Air?

*Lear.* You must bear with me, I am Old and Foolish.

[*They lead him off.*]

*Cord.* The Gods restore you.—— Heark, I hear afar  
The beaten Drum, Old *Ken*'s a Man of's Word.  
O for an Arm

Like the fierce Thunderer's, when th' Earth-born Sons  
Storm'd Heav'n to fight this injur'd Father's Battel!  
That I cou'd shift my Sex, and die me deep

In



In his opposer's Bloud ! But as I may,  
 With Womens Weapons, Piety and Pray'rs,  
 I'll aid his Cause.——You never-erring Gods  
 Fight on his Side, and Thunder on his Foes  
 Such Tempests as his poor ag'd Head sustain'd ;  
 Your Image suffers when a Monarch bleeds.  
 'Tis your own Cause, for that your Succours bring,  
 Revenge your Selves, and right an injur'd King.

*End of the Fourth Act.*

## ACT V.

### SCENE, A Camp.

*Enter Goneril and Attendants.*

*Gon.* OUR Sisters Pow'rs already are arriv'd,  
 And she her self has promis'd to prevent  
 The Night with her Approach : Have you provided  
 The Banquet I bespoke for her Reception  
 At my Tent ?

*Att.* So, please your Grace, we have.

*Gon.* But thou, my Poisoner, must prepare the Bowl  
 That crowns this Banquet, when our Mirth is high,  
 The Trumpets founding, and the Flutes replying,  
 Then is the Time to give this fatal Draught  
 To this imperious Sister ; if then our Arms succeed,  
 Edmund more dear than Victory is mine.  
 But if Defeat or Death it self attend me,  
 'Twill charm my Ghost to think I've left behind me  
 No happy Rival. Hark, she comes. *[Trumpet. Exeunt.*

*Enter Bastard in his Tent.*

*Bast.* To both these Sisters have I sworn my Love,  
 Each jealous of the other, as the Stung  
 Are of the Adder ; neither can be held  
 If both remain alive ; Where shall I fix ?  
 Cornwall is Dead, and Regan's empty Bed  
 Seems cast by Fortune for me, but already  
 I have enjoy'd her, and bright Goneril  
 With equal Charms brings dear Variety,  
 And yet untasted Beauty : I will use  
 Her Husband's Countenance for the Battel, then

Usurp



# KING LEAR.

47

Usurp at once his Bed and Throne.

[Enter Officers.

My trusty Scouts y' are well return'd; Have ye descry'd

The Strength and Posture of the Enemy?

† Off. We have, and were surpriz'd to find

The banisht *Kent* return'd, and at their Head;

Your Brother *Edgar* on the Rear; old *Gloster*

(A moving Spectacle) led through their Ranks,

Whose pow'rfull Tongue, and more prevailing Wrongs,

Have so enrag'd their rustick Spirits, that with

Th' approaching Dawn we must expect their Battel.

*Bast.* You bring a wellcome Hearing; Each to his Charge.

Line well your Ranks, and stand on your Award,

To Night repose you, and i'th' Morn we'll give

The Sun a Sight that shall be worth his Rising.

[Exeunt.

## SCENE, A Valley near the Camp.

Enter *Edgar* and *Gloster*.

*Edg.* Here, Sir, take you the shadow of this Tree

For your good Host; pray that the Right may thrive:

If ever I return to you again

I'll bring you Comfort.

[Exit.

*Gloster.* Thanks, friendly Sir;

The Fortune your good Cause deserves betide you.

*An Alarm; after which Gloster speaks.*

The Fight grows hot; the whole War's now at Work,

And the goar'd Battel bleeds in every Vein,

Whilst Drums and Trumpets drown loud Slaughter's Roar:

Where's *Gloster* now that us'd to head the Fray,

And scour the Ranks where deadliest danger lay?

Here like a Shepherd in a lonely Shade,

Idle, unarm'd, and listening to the Fight;

Yet the disabled Courser, Maim'd, and Blind,

When to the Stall he hears the rattling War,

Foaming with Rage, tears up the batter'd Ground,

And tugs for Liberty.

No more of Shelter, thou blind Worm, but forth

To th' open Field; the War may come this way

And crush thee into Rest.—Here lie thee down,

And tear the Earth, that work befits a Mole.

O dark Despair! When, *Edgar*, wilt thou come

To pardon and dismiss me to the Grave;

[A Retreat sounded.

Heark! a Retreat, the King has lost or won.



*Re-enter Edgar, bloody.*

*Edg.* Away, old Man, give me your Hand, away !  
King *Lear* has lost ; He and his Daughter ta'en,  
And this, ye Gods, is all that I can save  
Of this most precious Wreck ; give me your Hand.

*Gloft.* No farther, Sir, a Man may rot even here.

*Edg.* What ! In ill Thoughts again ? Men must endure  
Their going hence, ev'n as their coming hither.

*Gloft.* And that's true too.

*[Exeunt.]*

*Flourish. Enter in Conquest, Albany, Goneril, Regan, Bastard. —*  
*Lear, Kent, Cordelia Prisoners.*

*Alb.* It is enough to have conquer'd, Cruelty  
Shou'd ne'er survive the Fight, Captain o'th' Guards,  
Treat well your Royal Prisoners till you have  
Our farther Orders, as you hold our Pleasure.

*Gon.* Hark ! Sir, not as you hold our Husband's pleasure.

*[To the Captain aside.]*

But as you hold your Life, dispatch your Pris'ners.  
Our Empire can have no sure Settlement  
But in their Death, the Earth that covers them  
Binds fast our Throne. Let me hear they are Dead.

*Capt.* I shall obey your Orders.

*Bast.* Sir, I approve it safest to pronounce  
Sentence of Death upon this wretched King,  
Whose Age has Charms in it, his Title more,  
To draw the Commons once more to his Side,  
'Twere best prevent. —

*Alb.* Sir, by your Favour,  
I hold you but a Subject of this War,  
Not as a Brother.

*Reg.* That's as we list to Grace him.  
Have you forgot that he did lead our Pow'rs ?  
Bore the Commission of our Place and Person ?  
And that Authority may well stand up,  
And call it self your Brother.

*Gon.* Not so hot,  
In his own Merits he exalts himself  
More than in your Addition.

*Enter Edgar, disguised,*

*Alb.* What art thou ?

*Edg.* Pardon me, Sir, that I presume to stop

A Prince



# KING LEAR.

4

A Prince and Conquerour, yet e'er you Triumph,  
Give Ear to what a Stranger can deliver  
Of what concerns you more than Triumph can.  
I do impeach your General there of Treason,  
Lord *Edmund*, that usurps the Name of *Gloster*,  
Of foulest Practice 'gainst your Life and Honour;  
This Charge is True, and wretched though I seem  
I can produce a Champion that will prove  
In single Combat what I do avouch;  
If *Edmund* dares but trust his Cause and Sword.

*Bast.* What will not *Edmund* dare, my Lord, I beg  
The favour that you'd instantly appoint  
The Place where I may meet this Challenger,  
Whom I will sacrifice to my wrong'd Fame;  
Remember, Sir, that injur'd Honour's nice  
And cannot brook delay.

*Alb.* Anon, before our Tent, i'th' Army's view,  
There let the Herald cry.

*Edg.* I thank your Highness in my Champion's Name,  
He'll wait your Trumpet's call.

*Alb.* Lead.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Remain Lear, Kent, Cordelia, guarded.*

*Lear.* O *Kent*, *Cordelia*!

You are the only Pair that I e'er wrong'd,  
And the just Gods have made you Witnesses  
Of my Disgrace, the very shame of Fortune,  
To see me chain'd and shackled at these year's!  
Yet were you but Spectatours of my Woes,  
Not fellow-sufferers, all were well!

*Cord.* This language, Sir, adds yet to our Affliction.

*Lear.* Thou, *Kent*, didst head the Troops that fought my Battel,  
Expos'd thy Life and Fortunes for a Master  
That had (as I remember) banisht Thee.

*Kent.* Pardon me, Sir, that once I broke your Orders,  
Banisht by you, I kept me here disguis'd  
To watch your Fortunes, and protect your Person;  
You know you entertain'd a rough blunt Fellow,  
One *Cajus*, and you thought he did you Service.

*Lear.* My trusty *Cajus*, I have lost him too!  
'Twas a rough Honesty.

[*Weeps.*]

*Kent.* I was that *Cajus*,  
Disguis'd in that course Dress, to follow you.

*Lear.* My *Cajus* too! wer't thou my trusty *Cajus*,  
Enough, enough —

*Cord.* Ah me, he faints! his Bloud forsakes his Cheek,

H

Help



Help, Kent. —

*Lear.* No, no, they shall not see us weep,  
We'll see them rot first. — Guards, lead away to Prison;  
Come Kent, Cordelia, come;  
We two will sit alone, like Birds i'th' Cage,  
When Thou dost ask me Blessing, I'll kneel down  
And ask of Thee Forgiveness; Thus we'll live,  
And pray, and sing, and tell old Tales, and laugh  
At gilded Butter-flies, hear Sycophants  
Talk of Court News, and we'll talk with them too;  
Who loses, and who wins, who's in, who's out,  
And take upon us the Mystery of Things  
As if we were Heav'n's Spies.

*Cord.* Upon such Sacrifices  
The Gods themselves throw Incense.

*Lear.* Have I caught ye?  
He that parts us must bring a Brand from Heav'n:  
Together we'll out-toil the spight of Hell,  
And dye the Wonders of the World; Away.

[*Exeunt, guarded.*]

*Flourish.* Enter before the Tents, Albany, Goneril, Regan, Guards  
and Attendants; Goneril speaking apart to the Captain of the  
Guards entring.

*Gon.* Here's Gold for Thee, Thou know'st our late Command  
Upon your Pris'ners Lives; about it streight, and at  
Our Ev'ning Banquet let it raise our Mirth,  
To hear that they are Dead.

*Cap.* I shall not fail your Orders. [Ex.]

Albany, Gon. Reg. take their Seats.

*Alb.* Now, Gloster, trust to thy single Vertue, for thy Soldiers  
All levied in my Name, have in my Name  
Took their Discharge; now let our Trumpets speak,  
And Herald read out this. [Herald Reads.]

If any Man of Quality, within the Lists of the Army, will maintain  
upon Edmund, suppos'd Earl of Gloster, that he is a manifold Trai-  
tour, let him appear by the third sound of the Trumpet. He is  
bold in his Defence. — Agen, Agen.

[Trumpet answers from within.]

Enter



*Enter Edgar arm'd*

*Alb. Lord Edgar!*

*Bast. Ha! my Brother!*

This is the only Combatant that I could fear;  
For in my Breast Guilt duels on his side,  
But, Conscience, what have I to do with Thee?  
Awe Thou thy dull legitimate Slaves, but I  
Was a born Libertine, and so I keep me.

*Edg. My noble Prince, a word; — e'er we engage*  
*Into your Highness's Hands I give this Paper;*  
*It will the truth of my Impeachment prove.*  
*Whatever be my fortune in the Fight.*

*Alb. We shall peruse it.*

*Edg. Now, Edmund, draw thy Sword,*  
*That if my speech has wrong'd a Noble Heart,*  
*Thy Arm may doe thee Justice: Here i'th presence*  
*Of this high Prince, these Queens, and this crown'd List,*  
*I brand thee with the spotted Name of Traitor,*  
*False to thy Gods, thy Father, and thy Brother,*  
*And what is more, thy Friend; false to this Prince:*  
*If then thou shar'st a spark of Gloster's Vertue,*  
*Acquit thy self; or if thou shar'st his Courage,*  
*Meet this Defiance bravely.*

*Bast. And dares Edgar,*  
*The beaten routed Edgar, brave his Conquerour?*  
*From all thy Troops and Thee, I forc't the Field,*  
*Thou hast lost the gen'ral Stake, and art Thou now*  
*Come with thy petty single Stock to play*  
*This after-game?*

*Edg. Half-blouded Man,*  
*Thy Father's Sin first, then his Punishment;*  
*The dark and vicious Place where he begot thee*  
*Cost him his Eyes; from thy licentious Mother*  
*Thou draw'st thy Villany; but for thy part*  
*Of Gloster's Bloud, I hold thee worth my Sword.*

*Bast. Thou bear'st Thee on thy Mother's Piety,*  
*Which I despise; thy Mother being chaste*  
*Thou art assur'd Thou art but Gloster's Son;*  
*But mine, disdaining Constancy, leaves me*  
*To hope that I am sprung from nobler Bloud,*  
*And possibly a King might be my Sire:*  
*But be my Birth's uncertain Chance as 'twill,*  
*Who 'twas that had the hit to Father me*  
*I know not; 'tis enough that I am I:*



Of this one thing I'm certain, ——— that I have  
A daring Soul, and so have at thy Heart.  
Sound Trumpet.

[*Fight, Bastard falls.*]

*Gon.* and *Reg.* Save him, save him.

*Gon.* This was Practice, *Gloster*,  
Thou won't the Field, and wast not bound to Fight  
A vanquish't Enemy, Thou art not conquer'd,  
But couz'n'd and betray'd.

*Alb.* Shut your Mouth, Lady,  
Or with this Paper I shall stop it. ——— Hold, Sir,  
Thou worse than any Name, read thy own evil:  
No Tearing, Lady, I perceive you know it.

*Gon.* Say, if I do, who shall arreign me for't?  
The Laws are Mine, not Thine.

*Alb.* Most monstrous! Ha! Thou know'st it too?

*Bast.* Ask me not what I know,  
I have not Breath to answer idle Questions.

*Alb.* I have resolv'd ——— your Right, brave Sir, has conquer'd,  
To Edgar.

Along with me, I must consult your Father.

[*Ex. Albany and Edgar.*]

*Reg.* Help every Hand to save a noble Life;  
My half o'th' Kingdom for a Man of Skill  
To stop this precious stream.

*Bast.* Away ye Empyricks,  
Torment me not with your vain Offices;  
The Sword has pierc't too far; *Legitimacy*  
At last has got it.

*Reg.* The Pride of Nature dyes.

*Gon.* Away, the minutes are too precious,  
Disturb us not with thy impertinent Sorrow.

*Reg.* Art thou my Rival then profest?

*Gon.* Why, was our Love a Secret? cou'd there be  
Beauty like Mine, and Gallantry like His,  
And not a mutual Love? Just Nature then  
Had err'd. Behold that Copy of Perfection,  
That Youth whose Story will have no foul Page,  
But where it says he stoopt to *Regan's* Arms:  
Which yet was but Compliance, not Affection;  
A Charity to begging, ruin'd Beauty!

*Reg.* Who begg'd when *Goneril* writ That? expose it,

[*Throws her a Letter.*]

And let it be your Army's mirth, as 'twas  
This charming Youth's and mine, when in the Bow'r



He breath'd the warmest Ecstasies of Love ;  
Then panting on my Breast, cry'd, Matchless *Regan* !  
That *Goneril* and thou shou'd e'er be Kin !

*Gon.* Dye, *Circe*, for thy Charms are at an end,  
Expire before my Face, and let me see  
How well that boasted Beauty will become  
Congealing Bloud, and Death's convulsive Pangs :  
Dye and be hush'd, for at my Tent last Night  
Thou drank'st thy Bane, amidst thy rev'ling Bowls :  
Ha ! Dost thou Smile ? Is then thy Death thy Sport ?  
Or has the trusty Potion made thee Mad ?

*Reg.* Thou com'st as short of me in thy Revenge  
As in my *Gloster's* Love, my Jealousie  
Inspir'd me to prevent thy feeble Malice,  
And poison thee at thy own Banquet.

*Gon.* Ha !

*Bast.* No more, my Queen's, of this untimely Strife,  
You both deserv'd my Love, and both posselt it.  
Come, Soldiers, bear me in ; and let  
Your Royal Presence grace my last minutes ;  
Now, *Edgar*, thy proud Conquest I forgive ;  
Who wou'd not chuse, like me, to yield his Breath  
T'have Rival Queens contend for him in Death?

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE, A Prison.

*Lear asleep, with his Head on Cordelia's Lap.*

*Cord.* What Toils, thou wretched King, hast Thou endur'd  
To make Thee draw, in Chains, a Sleep so sound ?  
Thy better Angel charm thy ravish'd Mind  
With fann'd Freedom ; Peace is us'd to lodge  
On Cottage Straw. Thou hast the Beggar's Bed,  
Therefore shoudst have the Beggar's careless Thought.  
And now, my *Edgar*, I remember Thee,  
What fate has seiz'd Thee in this general Wreck  
I know not, but I know thou must be wretched,  
Because *Cordelia* holds thee Dear.  
O Gods ! a sudden Gloom o'erwhelms me, and the Image  
Of Death o'er-spreads the Place. — Ha ! Who are These ?

*Enter Captain and Officers with Cords.*

*Capt.* Now, Sirs, dispatch, already you are paid  
In part, the best of your Reward's to come.

*Lear.*



*Lear.* Charge, charge upon their Flank, their last Wing halts.  
Push, push the Battel, and the Day's our own.  
Their Ranks are broke, down, down with *Albany*.  
Who holds my Hands? — O thou deceiving Sleep,  
I was this very Minute on the Chace;  
And now a Prisoner here. — What mean the Slaves?  
You will not murther me?

*Cord.* Help, Earth and Heaven!  
For your Souls sake, dear Sirs, and for the Gods.

*Offic.* No Tears, good Lady, no pleading against Gold and Pre-  
ferment.

Come, Sirs, make ready your Cords.

*Cord.* You, Sir, I'll seize,  
You have a humane Form, and if no Pray'rs  
Can touch your Soul to spare a poor King's Life,  
If there be any thing that you hold Dear,  
By that I beg you to dispatch me first.

*Cap.* Comply with her Request; dispatch her First.

*Lear.* Off Hell-hounds, by the Gods I charge you spare her;  
'Tis my *Cordelia*, my true pious Daughter:  
No Pity? — Nay then take an old Man's Vengeance.

*Snatches a Partisan, and strikes down two of them; the rest quit Cor-  
delia, and turn upon him. Enter Edgar and Albany.*

*Edg.* Death! Hell! Ye Vultures, hold your impious Hands,  
Or take a speedier Death than you wou'd give.

*Cap.* By whose Command?

*Edg.* Behold the Duke, your Lord.

*Alb.* Guards, seise those Instruments of Cruelty.

*Cord.* My *Edgar*, Oh!

*Edg.* My dear *Cordelia*! Lucky was the Minute  
Of our Approach, the Gods have weigh'd our Suff'rings;  
W'are past the Fire, and now must shine to Ages.

*Gent.* Look here, my Lord, see where the generous King  
Has slain two of 'em.

*Lear.* Did I not, Fellow?  
I've seen the Day, with my good-biting Faulchion  
I cou'd have made 'em skip; I am Old now,  
And these vile Crosses spoil me; Out of Breath!  
Fie, Oh! quite out of Breath, and spent.

*Alb.* Bring in old *Kent*; and, *Edgar*, guide you hither  
Your Father, whom you said was near,

[*Ex. Edgar.*

He may be an Ear-witness at the least  
Of our Proceedings.

[*Kent brought in here.*

*Lear.*



# KING LEAR.

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*Lear.* Who are you?

My Eyes are none o'th Best, I'll tell you streight;

Oh *Albany*! Well, Sir, we are your Captives,

And you are come to see Death pass upon us.

Why this Delay? — or is't your Highness pleasure

To give us first the Torture? Say ye so?

Why here's old *Kent* and I, as tough a Pair

As e'er bore Tyrant's Stroke: — But my *Cordelia*,

My poor *Cordelia* here, O pitty! —

*Alb.* Take off their Chains. — Thou injur'd Majesty,

The Wheel of Fortune now has made her Circle,

And Blessings yet stand 'twixt thy Grave and Thee.

*Lear.* Com'ft thou, inhumane Lord, to sooth us back

To a Fool's Paradise of Hope, to make

Our Doom more wretched? Go to, we are too well

Acquainted with Misfortune to be gull'd

With Lying Hope; No, we will hope no more.

*Alb.* I have a Tale t'unfold so full of Wonder

As cannot meet an easie Faith;

But by that Royal injur'd Head 'tis True.

*Kent.* What wou'd your Highness?

*Alb.* Know, the noble *Edgar*

Impeacht Lord *Edmund* since the Fight, of Treason,

And dar'd him for the Proof to single Combat,

In which the Gods confirm'd his Charge by Conquest;

I left ev'n now the Traitor wounded mortally.

*Lear.* And whither tends this Story?

*Alb.* E'er they fought

Lord *Edgar* gave into my Hands this Paper,

A blacker Scrawl of Treason, and of Lust

Than can be found in the Records of Hell;

There, Sacred Sir, behold the Character

Of *Goneril* the worst of Daughters, but

More vicious Wife.

*Cord.* Cou'd there be yet Addition to their Guilt?

What will not They that wrong a Father doe?

*Alb.* Since then my Injuries, *Lear*, fall in with Thine,

I have resolv'd the same Redress for both.

*Kent.* What says my Lord?

*Cord.* Speak, for me thought I heard

The charming Voice of a descending God.

*Alb.* The Troops by *Edmund* rais'd, I have disbanded;

Those that remain are under my Command.

What Comfort may be brought to chear your Age,

And heal your savage Wrongs, shall be apply'd;

For to your Majesty we do resign

Your



Your Kingdom, save what part your Self conferr'd  
On us in Marriage.

*Kent.* Hear you that, my Liege?

*Cord.* Then there are Gods, and Vertue is their Care.

*Lear.* Is't Possible?

Let the Spheres stop their Course, the Sun make halt,  
The winds be hush'd, the Seas and Fountains rest;  
All Nature pause, and listen to the Change.

Where is my *Kent*, my *Cajus*?

*Kent.* Here, my Leige.

*Lear.* Why I have News that will recall thy Youth;  
Ha! Didst Thou hear 't, or did th' inspiring Gods  
Whisper to me alone? Old *Lear* shall be  
A King again.

*Kent.* The Prince that, like a God, has Pow'r, has said it.

*Lear.* *Cordelia* then shall be a Queen, mark that:  
*Cordelia* shall be a Queen; Winds catch the Sound,  
And bear it on your rosie Wings to Heav'n.  
*Cordelia* is a Queen.

*Re-enter Edgar with Gloster.*

*Alb.* Look, Sir, where Pious *Edgar* comes,  
Leading his Eye-less Father: O my Liege!  
His wondrous Story will deserve your Leisure:  
What he has done and suffer'd for your Sake,  
What for the fair *Cordelia*'s.

*Gloft.* Where is my Liege? Conduct me to his Knees, to hail  
His second Birth of Empire; my dear *Edgar*  
Has, with himself, reveal'd the King's blest Restauration.

*Lear.* My poor dark *Gloster*;

*Gloft.* O let me kiss that once more sceptred Hand!

*Lear.* Hold, Thou mistak'st the Majesty, kneel here;  
*Cordelia* has our Pow'r, *Cordelia*'s Queen.

Speak, Is not that the noble Suff'ring *Edgar*?

*Gloft.* My pious Son, more dear than my lost Eyes!

*Lear.* I wrong'd him too, but here 's the fair Amends.

*Edg.* Your Leave, my Liege, for an unwellcome Message.

*Edmund* (but that 's a Trifle) is expir'd;

What more will touch you, your imperious Daughters  
*Goneril* and haughty *Regan*, both are Dead,  
Each by the other poison'd at a Banquet;  
This, Dying, they confest.

*Cord.* O fatal Period of ill-govern'd Life!

*Lear.* Ingratefull as they were, my Heart feels yet  
A Pang of Nature for their wretched Fall; —

But



But, *Edgar*, I deferr thy Joys too long :

~~Thou serv'dst distressed Cordelia, take her Crown'd:~~

Th' imperial Grace fresh blooming on her Brow ;

Nay, *Gloster*, Thou hast here a Father's Right,

Thy helping Hand t' heap Blessings on their Heads.

*Kent*. Old *Kent* throws in his hearty Wishes too.

*Edg*. The Gods and You too largely recompence  
What I have done ; the Gift strikes Merit dumb.

*Cord*. Nor do I blush to own my self o'er-paid  
For all my Suff'rings past.

*Gloster*. Now, gentle Gods, give *Gloster* his Discharge.

*Lear*. No, *Gloster*, Thou hast Business yet for Life ;  
Thou, *Kent*, and I, retir'd to some cool Cell  
Will gently pass our short reserves of Time  
In calm Reflections on our Fortunes past,  
Cheer'd with Relation of the prosperous Reign  
Of this celestial Pair ; Thus our Remains  
Shall in an even Course of Thought be past,  
Enjoy the present Hour, nor fear the Last.

*Edg*. Our drooping Country now erects her Head,  
Peace spreads her balmy Wings, and Plenty blooms.

Divine *Cordelia*, all the Gods can Witness

How much thy Love to Empire I prefer !

Thy bright Example shall convince the World

(Whatever Storms of Fortune are decreed)

That Truth and Vertue shall at last succeed.

[*Ex. Omnes.*]

**FINIS.**



## EPILOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. BARRINGTON.

**I** Nconstancy, the reigning Sin o' th' Age,  
 Will scarce endure true Lovers on the Stage,  
 You hardly ev'n in Plays with such dispensation,  
 And poets kill 'em in their own Defence.  
 Yet one bold Proof I was resolv'd to give,  
 That I cou'd three Hours Constancy out-live,  
 You fear, perhaps, whilst on the Stage we are made  
 Such Saints, we shall indeed take up the Trade,  
 Sometimes we Threaten, — but our Vertue may  
 For Truth I fear with your Pit-Valour weigh,  
 For (not to flatter either) I much doubt  
 When we are off the Stage, and you are out,  
 We are not quite so Coy, nor you so Stout.  
 We talk of Nunn'ries, — But to be sincere  
 Whoever lives to see us cloister'd there,  
 May hope to meet our Criticks at Tangier.  
 For shame give over this inglorious Trade  
 Of worrying Poets, and go maul th' Alcade.  
 Well since — y' are all for blustering in the Pit,  
 This Play's Reviver humbly do's admit  
 Your ab's'lute Pow'r to damn his part of it :  
 But still so many Master-Touches shine  
 Of that vast Hand that first laid this Design,  
 That in great Shakespear's Right, He's bold to say,  
 If you like nothing you have seen to day,  
 The Play your Judgment damns, not you the Play.



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Shakespeare, W.